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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under Article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Combined third, fourth and fifth periodic reports of State parties

Cyprus*

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.
For the combined initial and second periodic report submitted by the Government of Cyprus see CEDAW/C/CYP/1-2, which was considered by the Committee at its fifteenth session.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Pages
PART I - INTRODUCTION	3
PART II - PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION	5
ARTICLE 1. INTERPRETATION OF DISCRIMINATION	5
ARTICLE 2. ELIMINATION OF LEGAL AND REAL DISCRIMINATION	5
ARTICLE 3. NATIONAL WOMEN'S MACHINERY	11
ARTICLE 4. SPECIAL TEMPORARY MEASURES - POSITIVE ACTION PROGRAMMES	20
ARTICLE 5. CHANGES OF SOCIAL ATTITUDES-VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	22
ARTICLE 6. TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND THE EXPLOITATION OF PROSTITUTION OF WOMEN	29
ARTICLE 7. POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE	33
ARTICLE 8. REPRESENTATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL	37
ARTICLE 9. NATIONALITY	37
ARTICLE 10. EDUCATION	37
ARTICLE 11. EMPLOYMENT	42
ARTICLE 12. HEALTH AND AIDS	51
ARTICLE 13. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE	56
ARTICLE 14. RURAL WOMEN	58
ARTICLE 15. EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW	59
ARTICLE 16. FAMILY LAW	61
PART III - STATISTICAL DATA	63
PART IV - LEGISLATIVE MEASURES	73

PART I - INTRODUCTION

1. The Republic of Cyprus has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1985, by **Law 78/1985**, with a single reservation on Article 9, paragraph 2. This reservation was withdrawn on 28 June, 2000.

2. In accordance with Article 18 of the CEDAW, Cyprus submitted its Initial and Second Periodic Report {CEDAW/C/CYP/1-2} in 1994, covering the period 1985-1993[1] (in the Present Report referred to as "the Previous Report"), which was examined by the CEDAW Committee in January 1996. Hence, the Present Report, which covers the developments on the issue of gender equality during the years 1994-2003, should be regarded as the Third, Fourth and Fifth Periodic Report of Cyprus.

3. The Present Report has been drafted in accordance with the Guidelines for the Preparation of Reports by State Parties, 26.7.96 and focuses, in particular, on responding to the Concluding Comments of the Committee in the consideration of the Previous Report. The Present Report is accompanied by an updated CORE Document.

4. The Present Report is prepared by the Law Commissioner, pursuant to a relevant Decision of the Council of Ministers. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order is the competent Ministry for the purposes of the CEDAW and, through the National Machinery for Women's Rights, is very much involved in the preparation of the Country Report under CEDAW. The information and data, on the basis of which the Present Report was compiled, was provided by the Ministries having competence for the specific matter, as well as the Law Office of the Republic. Information was also provided by NGOs, especially Women's Organizations. The Present Report was communicated to the National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights, which is presided over by the Law Commissioner and comprises representatives of all Government/Public Sector institutions, as well as of all NGOs dealing with human rights issues, professional associations, including the Press Council, and the University of Cyprus. The Present Report was also communicated to Women's Organizations. Furthermore, the Present Report will be translated into the national official languages and will be widely disseminated.

5. The CEDAW remains, to this day, one of the most important international legal instruments providing, at the national level, since its ratification, the framework of the Government's policies for the advancement of the status of women in Cyprus and the achievement of real equality between men and women. On the basis of the CEDAW, the Government has intensified its endeavours towards gender equality with a series of legal, policy and implementation measures, discussed in the Present Report, leading to very positive results. Nevertheless, despite the progress achieved and the constant increase of women's participation in all walks of life, there is still a lot to be done to achieve full equality.

6. Since the examination of the Previous Report, three major factors played a catalytic role on further advancing the implementation of the CEDAW in Cyprus. Firstly, the Beijing Platform for Action has given a new impetus, strengthened the political will and intensified the efforts towards

[1] Statistical Data in some areas are not available up to 2003; in such cases the data given are the most recent available.

legal and de facto gender equality. Secondly, the accession process of Cyprus to the EU, since 1998 moving at a very intensive pace, necessitated the harmonization with the acquis communautaire and resulted in the enactment, within specified time limits, of very important legislation affecting women's lives in the area of equal treatment and conditions at work, and, parallel to this, the creation of the necessary administrative infrastructure for the implementation of the relevant legislation and policies. Thirdly, the UN Secretary General's latest initiatives for a peaceful settlement of the Cyprus problem, along with the Government's efforts towards the reunification of the island, have boosted up women's initiatives for bicommunal meetings and projects contributing to the creation of a culture for peace on the island.

7. Furthermore, the profile of the flourishing economy Cyprus enjoys - in the year 2000, Cyprus was included among the 16 countries with the highest per capita income and among the 22 countries with the highest human development in the world – has increased the standard of living for both men and women in Cyprus. This economic progress could not have been achieved without the contribution and active participation of half of its population, the women of Cyprus.

8. Undoubtedly, women's position in the Cyprus society has improved in all its manifestations since the Previous Report. However, although traditional social prejudices and stereotyped attitudes have significantly changed, they are still identified as the major obstacle for the advancement of women to the full.

9. The accession of Cyprus to the European Union, on 1st May 2004, will certainly further enhance progress in that direction. The Treaties of the European Union and EU Regulations, containing specific provisions for the purpose of ensuring full equality between men and women in practice, will have supremacy over national law and direct effect in Cyprus. Numerous EU Directives which, Cyprus is bound to transpose and effectively implement, give particular emphasis on equal pay for work of equal value, access to employment, conditions at work, special advantages for pregnant women and breastfeeding women, and social security benefits. "Positive action" to ensure de facto gender equality, provided for by the EU Treaties is now becoming a reality in Cyprus. In view of the fact that all "players" in the game – Government, Parliament and civil society – are determined to ensure that Cyprus is in a position and, in fact, can operate by EU standards at all levels and in all areas, the way has unreversedly been paved for a further catalytic advancement of women in the country.

10. The Government of the Republic of Cyprus regrets that due to the continuing illegal occupation and effective control of 37% of its territory by Turkish military forces, the Government is unable to ensure the enjoyment of the rights provided for in the CEDAW in the whole of its territory and that, therefore, it is also deprived of its ability to apply the provisions of the CEDAW to those living in the part of the country under foreign occupation. Due to the above described situation, no reliable information and data are available regarding the enjoyment of the relevant rights by the Cypriot population living in the area that is not controlled by the Government. Therefore, all information and data presented in the Present Report concern the government – controlled areas.

11. It is earnestly hoped that a just and viable solution will be soon achieved and that the next Periodic Report of Cyprus will give information and data for the whole of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus.

PART II – PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION

ARTICLE 1: INTERPRETATION OF DISCRIMINATION

12. **The Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002),** which was enacted for harmonization with European Directives 76/207/EEC and 97/80/EC, prescribes the following definitions:

- «direct discrimination based on sex» means direct unfavourable treatment which is evidently related to sex, pregnancy, childbirth, nursing or maternity;
- «principle of equal treatment» means that there shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex, either directly or indirectly, by reference in particular to marital or family status, as regards to any of the regulated by the Ordinance issues;
- «discrimination based on sex» means every action or omission which constitutes or entails unfavourable treatment based on sex, including sexual harassment, but not including protection of mothers due to pregnancy, childbirth, nursing, maternity or sickness due to pregnancy or childbirth and positive actions;
- «indirect discrimination based on sex» shall exists where an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice disadvantages a substantially higher proportion of the members of one sex unless that provision, criterion or practice is appropriate and necessary and can be justified by objective factors unrelated to sex.

13. **The Equal Pay between Men and Women for the Same Work or for Work of Equal Value Law, 2002 (L.177(I)/2002),** which was enacted for harmonization with European Directives 75/117/EEC and 97/80/EC, prescribes definitions of direct or indirect discrimination.

ARTICLE 2: ELIMINATION OF LEGAL AND REAL DISCRIMINATION

14. Based on the provisions of the CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action, the Government of Cyprus, through the National Machinery for Women's Rights, has formulated its National Action Plan, which covers the following areas corresponding to the national priorities:

- law reform;
- participation of women in political and public life;
- participation of women in the labour market and reconciliation of working and family responsibilities;
- violence against women;
- raising public awareness on women's issues;
- sensitization and gender mainstreaming in the government sector;

- strengthening of the national women's machinery/ setting up new structures;
- participation of Women in Peace Conflict Resolution, and
- harmonization with the acquis communautaire, on gender equality issues.

15. A series of legal measures as well as practical programmes have been pursued in all the above areas with very positive results, which will be described under the relevant Articles of the Convention, hereinbelow.

16. A firm commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities for men and women has been explicitly declared and promoted in all National Development Plans since 1975, including the latest National Development Plan 2004-2006, which has been drafted in line with the EU guidelines and approved by the Council of Ministers (Decision No. 57.798, dated 30.4.2003).

17. This policy has been expressed through measures aiming at a legislative framework to combat discrimination, the creation of the infrastructure for childcare facilities, as well as relevant institutional mechanisms and the improvement of women's participation and status in economic activity.

18. Furthermore, the Government's commitment and strong political will towards gender equality is manifested by acceding to and ratifying two very important international legal instruments for women's human rights, namely:

- **The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women**, ratified by **Law 1(III)/2002,** and
- **The Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms**, ratified by **Law 13(III)/2002**.

19. The National Machinery for Women's Rights (NMWR) plays a key role in the formulation, coordination and implementation of the Government's policy in this field, in collaboration with NGOs and all sectoral Ministries, which remain primarily responsible for the implementation of gender equality policies within their own sphere of competence (see under Article 3 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

20. In addition to the NMWR, other organs/bodies/committees/structures have been put in place in the public sector during the period under review promoting gender equality according to their specific sphere of competence. These include the:

- Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman).
- National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights.
- Advisory Committee on Domestic Violence.
- Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training.

- Investigation and Assessment of Work Committee under the Equal Pay legislation.

21. **Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman):**

(a) The Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman), established by **the Commissioner for Administration Law, 1991 (L. 3/1991, as amended),** is a very important institution for the extra-judicial control of the administration and safeguarding of human rights. The Ombudsman has competence to investigate complaints against any public service and its officers, including the police and the army for any act of maladministration or omission violating human rights.

(b) The annual reports, which are published and are also submitted to the President of the Republic, the Council of Ministers, and the House of Representatives, contain the Ombudsman's observations and suggestions. In addition, reports concerning investigation of each individual complaint, are submitted to the competent public service department/officer, and contain, in the event of the finding of violation, the Ombudsman's suggestions or recommendations for reparation measures within specified period; if a human right violation also constitutes a criminal offence, a copy of the report is also submitted to the Attorney-General, the Council of Ministers and the House of Representatives.

(c) Very recently, the Council of Ministers decided the expansion of the competences of the Ombudsman, so as to create the independent extra-judicial control mechanism required (i) by article 13 of Directive 2000/43/EC implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of their racial or ethnic origin, which will deal with complaints pursuant to two new laws to be enacted soon for the purposes of harmonization with the said Directive and will also deal with the implementation of the various international obligations of the Republic in relation to racial discrimination, (ii) by **the Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002),** (see under Article 11 of the Convention, hereinbelow), (iii) by **the Equal Pay between Men and Women for the Same Work or for Work of Equal Value Law, 2002 (L. 177(I)/2002)** (see under Article 11 of the Convention, hereinbelow) and (iv) by two laws to be enacted soon for the purpose of harmonization with Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and vocational training.

22. **National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights:**

(a) The National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights ("the Institution"), an independent body, established by a Decision of the Council of Ministers (No. 48.386, dated 16.9.1998), which is composed of the Law Commissioner, as President, and representatives of the Attorney-General of the Republic, various Ministries, the Ombudsman, the Commissioner for the Protection of Personal Data, the House of the Representatives, the University of Cyprus, NGOs engaged in the promotion of human rights, and professional associations, such as the Cyprus Bar Association, the Cyprus Medical Association and the Association for Journalists.

(b) The Institution is composed of two committees: the Monitoring Committee (responsible for monitoring the implementation of the international conventions on human rights) and the Steering Committee (responsible for the investigation of violations of human rights).

(c) The Institution has competence, inter alia-

(i) to provide information on human rights to all interested parties;

(ii) to provide any assistance for promoting public awareness;

(iii) to study, discuss and make suggestions on the state of human rights in Cyprus;

(iv) to advise the Government on any questions relating to human rights referred to the Institution for an opinion;

(v) to study and follow-up the legislation, case-law and administrative arrangements in relation to the protection and promotion of human rights; to prepare and submit recommendations and reports, to the competent organs, in relation to these issues;

(vi) to prepare and submit to competent bodies and committees reports, replies to questionnaires and memoranda in relation to human rights in Cyprus. The competent bodies include committees, set up by virtue of Conventions for the monitoring of the implementation of the said Conventions, such as the Committees set up by virtue of the following Conventions:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

- International Convention against Torture and Other Forms of Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

- Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

(vii) to examine, ex proprio motu of an application, complaints for violations of human rights and to submit reports and recommendations to the competent organs;

(viii) to submit recommendations and proposals, including the preparation of bills for the modernization and harmonization of the legislation with international human rights, instruments and treaties;

(ix) to organize lectures, seminars or assemblies of any kind, for information on, and promotion of, human rights;

(x) to take measures for obtaining scholarships of short duration for training programmes on human rights;

(xi) to prepare studies, translations and other documents on human rights, aiming at providing better information to the public on the citizens' rights and obligations;

(xii) to perform any other competence that the Council of Ministers may assign to it, in relation to the obligations of the Republic by virtue of international human rights instruments and treaties which the Republic is bound to implement.

(d) Pursuant to the above competences, the Institution receives hundreds of complaints per year, which are assessed and processed, depending on their nature. A considerable number of these complaints come from or relate to women (e.g. medical care for pregnant women, housing claims, asylum seekers, sexual harassment, civil debts, conditions at work, family violence, etc.). The Institution, further investigates, ex proprio motu, problematic issues which come to its attention. On the basis of the findings of its investigation, the Institution makes suggestions to the Government and/ or the House of Representatives (Parliamentary Committees).

(e) The Institution promotes public awareness and discussions on current items on the Human Rights Agenda, especially those relating to the Cyprus realities, makes suggestions to the Government and expresses opinions to the Parliamentary Committees of Human Rights on any human rights issue.

(f) The Institution is the liaison of the Republic of Cyprus with similar organizations abroad.

Advisory Committee on Violence in the Family

23. The Advisory Committee on Violence in the Family, appointed by the Council of Ministers, pursuant to **the Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, 2000 (L. 119(I)/2000)**, monitors the implementation of the said Law and promotes suggestions and measures for its implementation (see under Article 5 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training

24. The Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training, appointed by the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance, pursuant to **the Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002)**, monitors the implementation of the said Law and promotes suggestions and measures for its implementation (see under Article 11 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

Investigation and Assessment of Work Committee

25. The Investigation and Assessment of Work Committee, appointed by the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance pursuant to **the Equal Pay between Men and Women for the Same Work or for Work of Equal Value Law, 2002 (L. 117(I)/2002)**, deals with disputes under this legislation (see under Article 11 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

26. The setting up of an Equal Opportunities Commission to investigate complaints of sex-discrimination has been extensively discussed during these years. The NMWR as well as women's organizations have strongly supported this possibility. The Council of Ministers has finally decided, due to the small size of Cyprus, instead of creating a new body, to extend the competence of the

Commissioner of Administration so as to be able to investigate complaints of sex discrimination, as it has already been mentioned above.

27. In addition to the structures within the public sector, other bodies in the private sector have been set up to promote gender equality within their specific frame of competence. These include the:

- Immigrant Support Action Group
- International Eco-Peace Village
- Movement of Citizens Promoting Women's Participation in Politics
- Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies
- Hands Across the Divide
- Women's Cooperative Bank.

Progress

28. Based on the provisions of the CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action, progress has been achieved, in particular in the following areas:

- Legal reform, aiming at the elimination of discrimination and the further safeguarding of women's rights in all fields of law and, in particular, in Family and Labour Law, has been pursued, bringing national laws in line with relevant international instruments.

- The process of harmonization with the acquis communautaire in the Social Sector has been pursued intensively. Important legislation, including **the Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002), the Equal Pay Between Men and Women for the Same Work or for Work of Equal Value Law, 2002 (L. 177(I)/2002), the Maternity Protection (Amendment) Law, 2002 (L. 64(I)/2002) and the Parental Leave and Leave on Grounds of Force Majeure Law, 2002 (L. 69(I)/2002),** has been enacted (see under Article 11 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

- Economic independence of women has been pursued through measures facilitating the reconciliation of working and family responsibilities, promoting equal pay and the protection of maternity, the improvement of vocational guidance and training and schemes to support women's entrepreneurship.

- Violence against women has been tackled through legislative measures including the new laws on domestic violence and trafficking and exploitation of women, the setting up of new mechanisms for the protection and support of victims and the training of professionals, particularly police officers, involved in the handling of violence cases (see under Article 5 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

- Balanced representation of men and women in politics has been pursued through training programmes aimed at encouraging and supporting women to enter politics and at creating a friendlier environment for women within political parties (see under Article 7 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

- Women's efforts to achieve a culture of peace on the island have been taken concrete form in the establishment of the International Eco-Peace Village as well as developing bicommunal women's initiatives (see under Article 3 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

ARTICLE 3: NATIONAL WOMEN'S MACHINERY

29. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order is the competent Ministry in Cyprus for the overall promotion of gender equality and the protection of women's rights in all walks of life. Its instrument to this effect is "The National Machinery for Women's Rights" (NMWR), which was set up by the Council of Ministers, (Decision no. 40.609, dated 16.2.1994) as continuation of the Permanent Central Agency for Women's Rights (established in 1988).

30. The NMWR deals with all matters concerning women, focusing on the elimination of legal discrimination against women and the promotion of real equality between men and women. More specifically, it advises the Council of Ministers on policies, programmes and laws promoting women's rights, monitors, coordinates and evaluates the implementation and effectiveness of these programmes and laws, carries out information, education and training programmes on relevant issues, supports and subsidizes women's organizations, contributes to the mobilization and sensitization of the Government Sector on equality issues and serves as a cooperation channel between the Government and NGOs working in this field.

31. The NMWR is a system of four bodies which comes under the auspices and chairmanship of the Minister of Justice and Public Order with the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry as Deputy Chairman. The four bodies are:

- The Council for Women's Rights, with the Minister of Justice and Public Order as Chairman, the Permanent Secretary as Deputy Chairman and representatives of the major 13 women organizations and trade unions;

- The Inter-Ministerial Committee with the Permanent Secretary as Chairman and the Competent Officers for Women's Rights appointed in all Ministries and the Planning Bureau as members;

- The National Committee for Women's Rights which consists of all the organisations-members of the Council for Women's Rights, all the Competent Officers for Women's Rights and more than other 50 Organisations which promote equality between men and women; and

- The General Secretariat of the NMWR, which is the Government Equality Unit, headed by a Secretary General, who is an officer in the Ministry of Justice and Public Order. It provides administrative and scientific support to the advisory bodies of the National Machinery, promotes and implements their decisions, while at the same time it constitutes the Government department

which is responsible for the formulation, coordination and implementation of the Government policy on gender equality and for monitoring of international developments in this field.

32. The NMWR acts as:

- a channel of communication between the governmental sector and the civil society (NGOs, Academic Institutions, etc),
- promotes inter-ministerial collaboration especially through the Gender Focal Points,
- facilitates the integration of gender issues into Government policies,
- encourages and supports the setting up of and collaborates with other bodies/structures promoting, gender equality such as the National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights, Women Studies Center in the University, Advisory Committee on Domestic Violence, Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training,
- works closely with the Planning Bureau in the preparation of the National Development Plans, and
- develops close links with all International Organisations working in this field.

33. Due to its coordinating role, the NMWR is very much involved in the preparation of the Periodic Reports under the CEDAW, as well as other progress reports on equality issues i.e. Progress Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing +5).

(a) The NMWR is fully funded and staffed by the Government budget. Its budget covers mainly the cost of programmes and activities undertaken by the NMWR (research, seminars, training, experts' advice, publications) as well as the subsidies for relevant projects and activities undertaken by Women's Organisations, Academic Institutions and other Organisations. Thus, the operational expenses and the compensation of the personnel working for the NMWR are covered by the annual budget of the Ministry.

(b) The budget of the NMWR has been increasing considerably during the last years. Efforts to secure additional financial and human resources and upgrade its status will be continued in order to enable it to perform effectively its role, which goes far beyond the development of women's specific activities and extends to the inclusion of a gender perspective in all national plans and policies (Gender Mainstreaming).

(c) The Machinery's annual budget increased from 44.000 Euros in 1995 to 366.000 Euros in 2003. The annual budget of the NMWR is part of the budget of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order. The wages of the staff and the operational expenses are paid by the budget of the Ministry.

34. The General Secretariat of the NMWR consists of only two professionals who are assisted, whenever this is required, by external experts in order to cope with the increasing bulk of work (reports, organization of seminars, etc).

35. The establishment of a modern Government Equality Unit which should be in a position, on the one hand, to influence more widely and effectively the Government Sector and on the other, to offer high level services/programmes to the public and particularly to women (information, guidance, legal advice, education/training programmes), has been declared by the new government.

(a) The help of the European Union has been sought in order to achieve this goal. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order, within the framework of the EU Programme for the implementation of the Policy Framework for Gender Equality, has organized a seminar with the participation of EU experts, in which the "European policies and Strategies in the area of Gender Equality and the necessary mechanisms for their implementation at the national level", have been analysed to government officials and NGOs representatives.

(b) The seminar was held in May 2003. One of the EU experts has undertaken to prepare and submit to the Government a Report with concrete suggestions as to how the National Machinery for Women's Rights should evolve, based on the experience of other European countries.

Projects and activities

36. During the period under review, the NMWR has made itself visible pursuing a number of projects and activities in line with the National Plan of Action. These include:

- A campaign for "More Women in Politics", which resulted in doubling the number of women MPs.
- Introduction of Gender Mainstreaming within the Public Sector.
- Public awareness on gender issues through collaboration with mass media including a daily radio programme.
- Training of the Police in addressing effectively the domestic violence cases.
- Development of research in areas affecting the lives of women.
- Contribution in the setting up/empowerment of the necessary/appropriate mechanisms bodies dealing with the enforcement of relevant legislation/promotion of gender-equality in general.
- Supporting women's groups and initiatives (Cooperative Women Bank/Eco-Peace Village, Bicommunal Women's Groups, Association of single parent families).

Law Reform

37. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order, through the National Machinery, plays a key role in the area of Law Reform, by

- monitoring the general progress towards legal equality,
- identifying areas where legal action is needed,

- monitoring the enforcement of the existing legislation, and
- initiating the setting up of Law Reform Committees to deal with specific issues.

38. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order is pursuing Law Reform, in close collaboration with the Attorney General of the Republic, the Law Commissioner, Women's Organisations and Trade Unions as well as all other Ministries and Departments which continue to be primarily responsible for the promotion of legal equality within their own sphere of competence.

(a) During the period under review, a number of new Law Reform Committees under the Law Commissioner have been set up, by a decision of the Council of Ministers, at the initiative of NMWR, to study matters relating to Family Courts and Causes for Divorce, Domestic Violence, Civil Marriage, Family Mediation, Sexual Harassment, Trafficking and Exploitation of Women and Children.

(b) As a result of their work a numbe of laws have been enacted, including the Combating of Trafficking of Persons and Sexual Exploitation of Minors Law, 2000 (L.3(I)/2000) and the Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, 2000(L.119(I)/2000).

39. In particular, in the field of Family Law, which comes under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, a series of amendment laws have been enacted improving the laws on Property Rights Between Spouses, Parents and Children Relations, Family Courts, the Children Law and the Marriage Law.

40. The contribution of the NMWR has also been substantial in relation to the elimination of discrimination in the Republic of Cyprus Citizenship Law of 1967, which resulted in the withdrawal of the Cyprus reservation on article 9(2) of the CEDAW. The NMWR had also contributed in the preparation of important equality laws in the framework of the harmonization process with the acquis communautaire.

41. The NMWR has taken the lead for the signing and ratification of the U.N. Protocol to the CEDAW, as well as the UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages.

Seminars/Training Programmes

42. In addition, to legislative action, the National Machinery for Women's Rights has requested and secured experts' advice from abroad on top priority issues such as the setting up of the Equal Opportunities Commission, the preparation of an Action Plan for Women's Participation in Politics, Training Programmes on Violence against Women, the promotion of Gender Mainstreaming in the Government Sector and the setting up of a Peace Village.

43. More specifically, the following consultancy missions/training programmes/seminars have been carried out/organized, during the period under review, with the assistance/and or sponsorship of international organizations and other agencies including the Commonwealth, the British Council and the Fulbright Commission:

- Consultancy mission of two British experts to convey the U.K. knowledge and experience from the operation of the Equal Opportunities Commission (April 1997).
- Consultancy mission of a British expert to assist Cyprus to develop an effective training programme to increase the participation of Women in Politics (May-June 1997).
- Preparatory mission of two experts to assist Cyprus to establish a Gender Management System enabling the Country to mainstream gender equality into all government policies (May 1998).
- Training Workshop on "Women and Men Working in Partnership in Politics" which was conducted by a team of three British trainers (October 1998).
- Family Violence Course delivered to Police Officers at the Cyprus Police Academy by a British expert (December 1998).
- Mediation Skills Training Programmes have been organized at the Cyprus Police Academy by an American expert who was a Fulbright Scholar in Cyprus (1998-99).
- A nine months mission of a Commonwealth expert in Cyprus to assist in the setting up the Eco-Peace Village (1998).
- Training Programme on Family Violence, which was conducted by two British experts at the Police Academy (October 1999).
- Training Seminar on "Women in Politics" which was conducted by a team of British experts (October 1999).
- Training Programme on Women in Political and Public Life for women to advance their political careers by a team of U.K. trainers (March 2000).
- Training Programme for Members of the Police on various topics including domestic violence by a team of American Professors (Cyprus Police Academy - September 2000).
- International Conference on Domestic Violence (November 2000).
- Training Programme on Domestic Violence for Members of the Police by a U.K. expert (Police Academy - December 2000).
- An enlightening event on Women and Racism in which a relevant film was showed and introduced by its producer, a Canadian filmmaker and educator (January 2001).
- Seminar on the role of Women in the Economic Development organized under the Euro-Mediterranean Forum (March 2001).
- Regional Programme on Gender Mainstreaming in the Health Sector, organized by the Commonwealth Secretariat (June 2001).

- Consultative visit by a U.K. expert on Gender Mainstreaming, in collaboration with British Council to develop a 3-year plan for gender mainstreaming in Cyprus (June 2001).
- Training Programme on Domestic Violence for members of the Police by a U.K. expert (December 2001).
- Training Seminar for Gender Focal Points on Gender Mainstreaming by a U.K. expert (April 2002).
- Seminar for Senior Government Officials on Gender Mainstreaming by a U.K. expert (April 2002).
- Training Seminar for Judges and Lawyers on Domestic Violence by an American Judge expert in this field (October 2002).
- Seminar on European Policies and Strategies in the field of Gender Equality and the Necessary Mechanisms for their Implementation at the National level, with experts for E.U Countries (May 2003).

Research

44. The NMWR encourages and supports research on gender issues carried out by NGOs, research institutions, and individuals. At the same time, institutions of tertiary education show great interest and promote research on gender issues, which – besides the benefit of the scientific results – contributes towards the sensitization of young people on these issues.

45. The NMWR subsidized various research projects including the following:

- Attitudes and Perceptions of the Cyprus Society regarding the Participation of Women in Politics. This research was carried out in two stages: a) quantitative, and b) qualitative. (Women's Organization of United Democrats) *(2001-2002).*
- Female Entrepreneurial Activity in Cyprus (Women's Cooperative Bank of Cyprus) *(2001-2002).*
- Women and Violence in the Family (Advisory Committee for Domestic Violence) *(1999).*
- Women's Participation in the Local Authorities since the Independence (University of Cyprus) *(2001).*
- Women in Education (conducted by a member of the Public Education Service Commission) *(2000.)*

46. Moreover, the Research Promotion Foundation, a Government financed agency, has included gender issues among its thematic schemes.

Gender Mainstreaming

47. The goal of pursuing gender mainstreaming has been incorporated for the first in the 5-year National Development Plan (1999-2003) under the special chapter on Women and Development.

48. The Republic of Cyprus acknowledges that an important component of the new strategy of gender mainstreaming it to set up mechanisms that will allow gender issues to be integrated into key sectors of Government, as well as the private sector and civil society. To this end, it has developed close collaboration between Government departments and the National Machinery for Women's Rights (NMWR) on the one hand, and other agencies, academic institutions and NGOs on the other.

(a) A consultancy visit by a European expert on Gender Mainstreaming took place in June 2001 in order to assist the NMWR in the development of a framework for a project on gender mainstreaming in Cyprus.

(b) Based on a 3 years plan on gender mainstreaming developed by the expert, the NMWR in collaboration with the British Council in Nicosia, have organized a training programme on gender mainstreaming for the Gender Focal Points of the Ministries as well as an awareness raising session on gender mainstreaming for high-ranking officials (April 2002). A follow-up seminar has also been organized in June 2002.

Publications

49. The NMWR contributes substantially towards making international instruments/texts and domestic laws in the field of gender equality and women's rights, known to the public at large and, in particular, to women.

50. Working towards this direction, it subsidies the preparation of relevant publication/leaflets/ magazines by NGOs and/or other agencies, disseminates relevant information, translates relevant international instruments and prepares and circulates its own publications such as the following:

- Translation of the Beijing Platform for Action into the Greek language (1995).
- Booklet on Violence in the Family Law (2000).
- Preparation and circulation of a booklet introducing all women candidates in the Parliamentary elections (2000).
- Progress Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (2000).
- A book on Human Rights of Women, which includes all relevant international legal instruments translated into Greek based on the UNESCO similar publication (2001).

International Relations

51. Cyprus, through the Ministry of Justice and Public Order and the National Machinery for Women's Rights, has been represented at a plethora of International Conferences of the United Nations including the:

- Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing Sept. 1995), where it submitted a relevant report;
- Regional Preparatory Meeting of 2000 for the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (Geneva, January 2000); and
- Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on Women 2000: Equality, Development, Peace in the 21st Century (New York) (June 2000), where it submitted a Progress Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

The relevant reports had been prepared by the NMWR.

52. Cyprus, being a Member State to the Council of Europe and the Commonwealth and an acceding state to the European Union, has participated in a number of Ministerial Conferences, and other seminars of the relevant International Organizations, including the following:

- 5th Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs (Trinidad and Tobago, November 1996).
- 4th European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men (Council of Europe, Istanbul, November 1997).
- 6th Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs (New Delhi, August 1999).
- European Ministers Meeting on Violence Against Women (Spain, February 2002).
- 5th European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Men and Women (Council of Europe, Skopje, January 2003).
- European Ministers Meeting on Women and New Technologies (Athens, May 2003).
- European Gender Equality Ministers Meeting on Political and Economical Decision-Making (Syracus, September 2003).

53. In addition, the NMWR invites and receives renowned personalities and experts in this field, regularly. Special mention is made to the visit of EU Commissioner for Social Policy and Employment, Ms Anna Diamantopoulou, in Cyprus and her meeting with the Council of the NMWR in May 2000. Other personalities, like the Swedish Minister for Equal Opportunities Mrs. Margaretta Winberg, Ms Anna Karamanou, President of the Equal Opportunities Committee of the European Parliament, Ms Flora Van-Houwelingen, Chairperson of the Steering Committee for Equality between Men and Women of the Council of Europe, Ms Maria Stratigaki, Chairwoman of the Advisory Committee of Equal Opportunities of E.U., have also visited Cyprus and had contacts with the competent Ministries and the NMWR.

Collaboration with Women's Organizations

54. In Cyprus there are many Women's Organizations, Trade Unions and other Non-Governmental Organizations, active in the promotion of women's rights and equal opportunities. A large number of these organizations are members of the NMWR, which supports their projects and activities.

55. Besides the 'traditional' Women's Organizations and Trade Unions, most of which are affiliated to political parties and have a very general mandate, there are many other specialized organizations, non-political, focused on a specific target/goal i.e. the Cyprus Federation of Business and Professional Women, the Violence in the Family Association, the Family Planning Association, the Single Parent Families Association, the Housewives Association, the Immigrant Support Action Group (a sub-committee of the National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights), the Refugee and Displaced Women Association, the Movement for Equal Representation in Politics, etc.

56. NGOs contribute to the improvement of women's position in society, in various ways. One such example is the Cyprus Federation of Business and Professional Women that seeks to promote women, both in the business and in the political setting, which attained an observer status at the Board of the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry and at the boards of its district branches. Another example is "Zonta" (a women's organization), which was involved in the EU Leonardo programme with the 'Femina' project. This project deals with gender equality at workplace with the pioneering theme of 'Women Trainers for Women Trainees'.

Women and Peace

57. Another area where women of Cyprus have been very active for the past 29 years, but more so in recent years, is the area of peace. Women facing the tragic consequences of occupation and subsequent displacement have been particularly sensitive on matters of human rights and peace.

58. The Women's Movement has organized demonstrations against the illegal Turkish occupation of the northern part of Cyprus through mass peaceful marches and have contributed to finding channels of communication between the two communities, creating thus a culture of peace on the island. As a result, a considerable number of bicommunal activities have taken place. The role of Turkish-Cypriot women also, as demonstrated in the emerging movement within the Turkish-Cypriot community in support of the efforts for reconciliation and the finding of a federal solution to the Cyprus problem, in particular in the last 15 months, has been very important as regards the efforts for a solution that would reunify the island and lead to peace and prosperity for its entire people.

59. A very important development in this field was the setting up of the International Eco-Peace Village in 1998 with the vision to contribute towards achieving the broader goal of peace for Cyprus and the other countries in the region. Its mission is to create an eco-sensitive international village, which focuses on the training of women and youth in ecological issues and sustainable development, in conflict prevention and peace, as well as in conflict resolution. Thus, relevant workshops have been organized with young people and women as participants.

60. The Federation of Women's Refugee Associations (KEGYK), established in 1999, to promote the issues of the internally displaced people in Cyprus, has also been active in campaigning to raise

awareness on the Cyprus political problem and the specific problems of the internally displaced women in Cyprus.

61. Bicommunal initiatives among Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot women have also taken place during the past few years, including the recent establishment of the first bicommunal women's group, namely the "Hands Across the Divide".

62. The NMWR supports all these organizations projects and initiatives and very recently has opened its doors to Turkish-Cypriot women's organizations to become full members.

ARTICLE 4: SPECIAL TEMPORARY MEASURES – POSITIVE ACTION PROGRAMMES

63. The Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. (205(I)/2002)) introduces the adoption of "positive action" measures in the field of employment and training, aiming at the real equality between men and women, in line with Article 141.4 of the Treaties of the European Union.

64. Positive measures have been pursued in various areas of policies, for example, in economic and political life, as described hereinbelow:

Economic Life

(a) Scheme to enhance Female Entrepreneurial Activity: In order to encourage entrepreneurship among women, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism introduced the 'Scheme to Enhance Female Entrepreneurial Activity', in March 2002.

(b) The scheme aims, inter alia, to:

- encourage women aged 18-55 to undertake self-employed work in manufacturing and selective activities in trade, services and tourism;
- create viable enterprises, particularly in rural areas, to serve the specific needs of the local economy;
- encourage women to use new technologies in the production and marketing of their products and services (e.g. information technologies);
- increase the employment opportunities for university graduates.

(c) Women's initiatives falling within the priority sectors are eligible for a grant of up to 50% of all eligible costs (with a ceiling of CY£25.000 and CY£15.000 for manufacturing activities and other activities respectively).

(d) In the first year, since the launching of the programme, 9 applications were approved for the total grant of CY£177.000. The activities of approved projects include manufacturing, agrotourism, and e-commerce.

65. Women's Cooperative Bank: The Women's Cooperative Bank seeks to soothe the problem of access to financial resources. Three hundred and fifty women with the vision to improve the standard of living of women founded the women's co-op bank, which started functioning in January 2001. The Bank does not rely on donations but on deposits and its clients can be both men and women.

(a) The objectives of the bank, inter alia, include:

- To enhance the creation and promotion of women-owned businesses, preferably in new fields. The coop has actively participated in the creation of the National Scheme to Enhance Female Entrepreneurship launched by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism.

- To cooperate with the Government as well as various Institutions in Cyprus and abroad in order to absorb funds and services in the framework of a number of projects. These sources could be utilized for the provision of more flexible loan terms. In addition to the aforementioned programme, the coop has been part of a number of European (e.g. Women's Eurochambers) and Euro-Mediterranean (e.g. AIM, SIFRA) networks.

- To carry out research on women-related issues. The bank's first project was on *Female Entrepreneurial Activity in Cyprus*. Its findings were used in the formulation of suggestions towards the National Scheme to Enhance Female Entrepreneurship launched by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism. A second one is planned on a *Comparative Study Between Men and Women Entrepreneurs in Cyprus*.

- To organize seminars and workshops in order to support and promote the economic advancement of women-owned businesses (e.g. on preparing business plans). Free advice/ guidance (e.g. in the preparation of the business plan) was provided to women interest in applying for the National Scheme to Enhance Female Entrepreneurship.

- In future: The coop is currently looking into ways to create a business incubator for companies launched by women. This should enable women sustain their launched ventures within the first two most difficult starting years by providing office space, office assistance, mentoring and legal advice, links and networking.

(b) The seven board members represent all towns and are experts in banking, business, and research. They are in contact with all the Cabinet Ministers and professional bodies - as for example, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, etc.- in order to establish links and promote their views on women-related issues. To this end, it works closely with the NMWR, which subsidized its first research project.

66. Special Training Programmes for Women: The Human Resources Development Authority (HRDA), with the aim to improve the occupational status of women, has organized special training programmes for women including 'Leadership and supervisory skills for female professional managers', 'The role of woman-leader in the modern business environment' and 'Women managing in business '.

Political Life

67. The campaign of the NMWR to support women candidates in the Parliamentary elections has been another successful example of positive action measures.

68. Moreover, three political parties have introduced the quota system with a minimum percentage of women in decision-making bodies. As a result, there has been an increase in the participation of women in political parties (see under Article 7 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

ARTICLE 5: CHANGES OF SOCIAL ATTITUDES – VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

69. Promotion of public awareness has been at the top of the agenda of the NMWR. It has organized a series of seminars, campaigns involving the local media, as well as training programmes for Government officials on various gender issues, such as, gender mainstreaming, participation of women in politics, violence against women etc. Moreover, it prepares and disseminates information and translates important documents in Greek, as for example, the Beijing Platform for Action and the UNESCO Document for Human Rights for Women, which are distributed free of charge. Women's Organisations play a vital role in this respect. They organize enlightening events and campaigns, prepare and disseminate information material, especially on new laws, enacted in the framework of harmonization with the acquis communautaire, thus contributing to the education of women on their rights and to the education of the general public.

70. Furthermore, institutions of tertiary education have a substantial contribution in this field, sensitizing young people on gender equality issues. This is done through research, introduction of special subjects in their curriculum, organization of lectures and seminars. A very important initiative has been taken by the "Intercollege" (a private college), by setting up the "Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies".

71. Developments in terms of the 'mushrooming effect' of new privately run radio and TV stations, in all major cities of Cyprus in the 1990s, led to the opening up of a number of new platforms for women, who are now invited by the media more frequently to present their views on issues of equality and other related current issues.

72. The NMWR takes various measures aiming at the sensitization of the mass media on gender issues including:

- forwarding of relevant informational material to the mass media;
- invitation of the representatives of the mass media to all its activities;
- encouragement and support of the participation of journalists in gender training programmes/ seminars in Cyprus and abroad;
- encouragement of the participation of more women in the mass media.

73. Despite the increase of participation of women in the media at various levels, the actual power at the decision-making level continues to be in male hands. A male-dominated area is that of chief

editors of national newspapers where, out of the 23 chief editors only 2 are women. Nonetheless, women's penetration in the field of the mass media – a vital field for the promotion of gender issues - is indisputable. While women journalists formed just 25.9% in 1990, their participation in the media increased to 31.3% in 1995 and reached 43.6% in the year 2000.

(a) Cyprus Radio Television Authority:

An important development in this field is the establishment of the Cyprus Radio Television Authority, which is the competent regulatory body for the establishment, installation and operation of private radio and television stations throughout the Republic of Cyprus. It is an independent Authority and was established under the Radio and Television Law (L. 7(I) of 1998, as amended). It is run by a board consisting of a chairman, a vice chairman and 5 members, out of whom 3 are women, appointed by the Council of Ministers, for a 6-year period.

(b) According to sections 26(1)c and 26(1)f of the said law, the broadcasts of all licensed stations are governed by the principles of respect for the personality, repute, status and private life of the individual and the ideals of democracy and human rights. Furthermore, section 33(3) (b) provides that advertising and tele-shopping shall not include any discrimination on grounds of race, sex, religion and nationality.

(c) Regulations, recently enacted deal with, inter alia, matters of discrimination. The Cyprus Radio Television Authority closely monitors stations and can take measures in cases where discrimination occurs.

74. The establishment of Radio 'Athina', a new woman's platform, is another positive development. It is run by a woman, who has been involved in the women's movement. Among the top priorities of the station is to address the special needs and problems of women as well as to present women's perspectives and women personalities. This is achieved through either general programmes, where special effort is made to reflect and discuss women's issues, or through special women's programmes, i.e. "Contemporary Athina", "Women in Politics", "On Equal Terms", etc. The NMWR has collaborated closely with Radio Athina, especially during the pre-election period in a daily programme, where women prospective candidates for the local/ parliamentary elections were interviewed and spoke about their political vision. Radio Athina offered, thus, a channel of communication with voters, which has proven to be necessary, as women have poor coverage and less access to the mass media compared to the male candidates during this critical time period.

75. On the whole, gender issues are promoted both in the electronic and the printed media. With reference to the electronic media, such issues are frequently discussed, however, less frequently during prime time TV viewing. In the case of the printed media, again articles on gender-related issues are published regularly (almost on a daily basis), however, they rarely make the headlines.

Violence against Women

(a) Violence against women has been another priority area for the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. Emphasis has been placed on the development of the appropriate legal framework. Cyprus

was one of the few countries to have enacted in 1994 a special law dealing specifically with family violence.

(b) The Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, 1994 (L. 47(I)/1994), condemns any act of violence within the family, raises substantially the penalties for violence and provides protection to victims mainly by empowering the Court to issue restraining orders prohibiting the aggressor from entering or staying in the marital home. In addition, Law 47(I)/1994:

- clarifies that rape can be committed within marriage,
- speeds up trials dealing with cases of domestic violence,
- facilitates the reporting of violent incidents,
- provides for the appointment of Family Counselors,
- provides for the setting up of an Advisory Committee to monitor the implementation of the Law and
- provides for a Multidisciplinary Group of Experts to give the necessary assistance to children and young victims.

(c) In 2000, the Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, 2000 (L. 119(I)/2000) was enacted in order to effect substantial improvements to the initial legislation. This Law provides, inter alia, for:

- taking of testimony of victims of violence by electronic means,
- protection of victims and witnesses,
- setting up of a fund to meet certain immediate needs of victims,
- establishment of a shelter where victims can have protection, and
- making the spouse a compellable witness if the victim is another member of the family.

(d) The new Law has completely restructured, the 1994 Law. Briefly, Part II deals with the meaning and the scope of violence; Part III with the appointment of family counselors and committees; Part IV introduces new provisions regarding the taking of statements by the use of audiovisual electronic means. Statements obtained by the use of these means may be produced in evidence without any need to re-examine the witness in chief, which, however, is available for the other side for cross-examination; Part V contains provisions for speedy trial and for the protection of the witness from harassment or intimidation; Part VI contains provisions for court orders for treating the accused; Part VII contains provisions regarding the establishment of a fund for assistance to victims of violence.

(e) More specifically-

- Section 17 deals with the admissibility of the evidence of a psychiatrist to whom a child patient during psychiatric treatment refers to incidents of ill treatment by any person. Such evidence requires, however corroboration by independent evidence. It is a new provision and it constitutes an exception to the hearsay rule;

- section 18 empowers the Court to provide protection to victims and witnesses of violence by taking their evidence in such a way as to avoid direct confrontation with the accused, but without depriving the accused of his right to examine the witness. The use of screens, close circuit television links and other means producing the same effect may achieve this;

- section 19 empowers the Court to interfere and give directions regarding the mode of cross-examination with the view to avoid bullying the witness;

- section 20 makes the spouse a compellable witness if the victim of family violence is another member of the family. It is interesting to note that in an indirect way, the spouse is a compellable witness even when the violence is directed against the spouse and this is done in the presence of children, because in such a case the violence is deemed to be exercised against the child;

- sections 21 to 24 deal with the issue of restraining orders. These provisions also existed in the 1994 law;

- section 31 provides for the establishment and operation of shelters for victims. Any person who harasses a person residing in a shelter commits an aggravated offence and is sentenced to up to 5 years of imprisonment;

- section 32 provides that, if the harassment or intimidation of a victim of violence or, of a witness of family violence takes place elsewhere, the harassment or intimidation constitutes an offence punishable with 3 years of imprisonment;

- under section 34, disclosing the identity of the victim or of the offender that may lead to the identification of the victim, constitutes an offence. This is an absolute prohibition and covers practically any person who acts contrary to the provision of this section.

(f) Sentencing Family Violence: **Law 119(I)/2000** lists offences of the Criminal Code, which, when committed within the family, are treated as particularly aggravated and, consequently, the penalty prescribed by the Criminal Code may be increased to reflect this (section 4).

(g) Suspended sentences and probation: By virtue of **Law 119(I)/2000** the Court has power to suspend sentences and to grant supervision orders (section 5).

(h) Restraining Orders: By virtue of Law 119(I)/2000, restraining orders may be issued against a person accused of an offence of violence ordering that person not to enter or stay in the marital home in a case where:

- the accused has a history of repeated acts of violence against members of the person's family or at least has two convictions in the last two years for similar offences; or

- the violence caused such actual, physical, sexual or psychological injury as to endanger the life, corporal integrity or sexual or psychological health of the victim; or

- the accused refused to submit himself/herself to treatment for self-control as required.

The conditions of a restraining order may be varied at an enquiry hearing in which all parties affected by it may make representations, the accused may apply for its revision or revocation. If the accused owns more than half of the property, the Court inquires into accommodation for the accused. If the accused owns less than half, the matter is referred to the family counselor (sections 23 and 24).

(i) Corroboration: By virtue of Law 119(I)/2000, the reporting by a victim of violence to specific persons (e.g. a police officer, family counselor, welfare officer, doctor who examines the victim, member of the advisory committee, member of the Association of the Prevention of Violence in the Family, or any member of the close environment of the victim) within a reasonable time from the commission of the offence, constitutes corroboration of the victim's testimony (section 14).

The Court may convict the accused only on the evidence of the victim if, under the circumstances, it is not possible to secure corroborative evidence (section 16).

(j) Criminal Process: By virtue of Law 119(I)/2000, the Court, upon application by the police, may issue a warrant for the arrest of any person accused of violence as defined in the Law. The accused is brought before the Court to be charged within 24 hours or for the issue of a remand order. Investigation and trial follow without delay. The Court may, before the trial, either direct the detention or release on surety of the accused or his compliance with any terms the Court may impose for the protection of members of his family, including an order prohibiting him from visiting or harassing any member of his family (section 15).

(k) Ordering a minor victim to leave the home: By virtue of Law 119(I)/2000, during the trial of violence against a minor, the Court may order that a minor leaves home and resides at a place of safety. An interim order, which is valid until the case is determined, may be applied for by the police, prosecutor, family counselor, or by any other person acting on the child's behalf or sworn statements by the victims (section 21).

(l) Witness Protection: Under Law 119(I)/2002, a victim may in confidence, report the case to the family counselor who would take all measures and steps for bringing the case before the Court. The Court may order that the evidence of the victim or witnesses may be heard, or that the whole trial may be held in camera, or may give such directions necessary for the protection of victims or other persons without prejudicing the rights of the accused to a fair trial. No information may be published in the press that would lead to the identification of the victim (section 18).

76. A special Law on witness protection was enacted in 2001, the Protection of Witnesses Law, 2001 (L. 95(I)/2001) which complements to Law 119(I)/2000 (see under Article 6 of the Convention, hereinbelow).

(a) Social Welfare Services: The role of Family Counselors specified in Law 119(I) /2000, is undertaken by the Department's Welfare Officers and is considered extremely important for the guidance and support of family members experiencing family violence. 10 Family Counselors (trained Welfare Officers) were appointed in 2001 with competence to:

- receive complaints of violence and carry out investigations;
- advise, counsel, and mediate any problems in the family that are likely to lead to, or have led to, the use of violence;
- make arrangements for an immediate medical examination of the complainant;
- take all necessary steps for the commencement of criminal proceedings against the perpetrator;
- carry out investigations into the accommodation/financial affairs of the family and the perpetrator, if an inhibition order is being considered;
- carry out any other function assigned.

(b) Family counselors may seek the protection of the police and the assistance of any government officer in carrying out their duties. In carrying out investigations, family counselors have the same powers as investigating police officers. The family counselor may take advice from a multidisciplinary group when an act of violence against a person under 18 is reported.

77. Advisory Committee on Family Violence: This is established under Law 119(I)/2000 for the prevention and combating of violence in the family, with competence to:

- monitor the problem of violence in the family in Cyprus;
- inform and educate the public and professionals using the media, conferences, seminars and re-education programmes;
- promote research;
- promote services necessary to deal with all aspects of violence in the family;
- monitor the effectiveness of related services and the application and enforcement of the relevant legislation.

78. The Committee members have knowledge and experience in matters relating to violence in the family and are selected from public and private sectors. Public sector appointees are selected by the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice and Public Order, Social Welfare Services, Legal Service and Police. Private sector appointees are selected by associations/organisations involved in combating family violence.

79. Manual of Interdepartmental Procedures: A manual of interdepartmental procedures concerning family violence was drafted by the Advisory Committee and submitted to the Government. The manual was approved on 16/5/2002 by the Council of Ministers, for immediate implementation. This manual provides a framework of how professionals should work together and focuses on interdepartmental cooperation. It is addressed to those who work in the Social Welfare Services, the Police Force, the Health Services, the Education Services, the Law Office of the Republic and the relevant NGOs.

80. Mandatory Reporting: The reporting of family violence cases is not compulsory by law. However, the Attorney-General gave instructions in June 1998 to all relevant Government Departments to report all family violence referrals/cases to his Office (mandatory reporting). From 1.1.1999 to 15.5.2003, 1402 such reports have been made to the Attorney-General (77 in 1999, 258 in 2000, 381 in 2001, 499 in 2002 and 669 in 2003). These cases are handled by Law Officers who, in close co-operation with the Social Welfare Services, decide whether it is in the best interest of the victim to take the case to Court (to prosecute the perpetrator).

81. From the records of the Office of the Attorney-General it is clear that a rapidly increasing number of cases is reported each year. This is attributed to the fact that a trust has been established with the victims and that cases are treated with absolute confidentiality and prosecution, if decided, is handled with strict observance to the provisions of the law relating to protection of witnesses and victims.

82. The Attorney-General has, already, decided the establishment of an electronic data bank at the Law Office of the Republic for Family Violence Reporting so that processing will be facilitated.

(a) *Police:* Members of the Police undergo specific training on the subject of family violence so that they can deal with such cases, to understand and respond to them appropriately and adequately. Given the fact that most complaints are filed by women, special-training emphasis is given to women Police Officers to whom most cases are referred.

(b) The major objective of the training programmes is to increase the participants' awareness and capabilities to assist mainly women and children victims of violence and/or rape, and to advance their knowledge and skills in handling such cases.

(c) Since May 2002, a large amount of the work carried out by the Police in the area of violence against women and especially Family Violence is specified in the Manual of Inter- Departmental Directions for Handling Cases of Family Violence, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Republic.

(d) In line with the above-mentioned guidelines, since December 2002 the Police operate a Central Bureau for Handling Issues of Prevention and Combating of Violence in the Family and of Child Abuse. The personnel of this Bureau include a staff lawyer and a staff psychologist. Further more, they operate the 24 hour Police Headquarter helpline for victims.

(e) Regarding the issue of specially designed premises, where necessary and possible, special rooms have been established and furnished, to be used for hosting and handling victims of family violence. Several of these rooms are being renovated to accommodate specialized statement

videotaping equipment, which has been installed. The police began to videotape statements of victims of domestic violence. The same procedures can be applied to cases of other witnesses who are considered in need of protection under the Protection of Witnesses Law, 2001 (L. 95(I)2001).

(f) Regarding training, the investment of Police in the field of family violence has continued and intensified. Training at the level of cadet, sergeant and inspector continues and specialized week-long seminars are organized annually for officers who investigate cases of family violence. Professionals from European countries and the United States are occasionally involved in this training and members of the Police attend family violence training programmes delivered in the UK or in the United States.

(g) A series of three specialized 5-day family violence training programmes are scheduled for February-March 2004 so that all shifts of Crime Investigation Departments and more shifts of Police Stations are staffed with specially trained personnel. An additional training on the subject of interviewing techniques with the assistance of videotaping equipment is being reviewed and it will take place in 2004. Aiming at better interdepartmental co-operation with the department of Welfare, a number of meetings of family counselors and police officers is to take place during 2004.

83. Non-Governmental Organizations: Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) play a very significant role in making the problem of domestic violence visible in the society, especially through their sensitization programmes and public campaigns. The Government supports and subsidises their programmes and activities. One important initiative in this field was the organization of an International Conference on Violence in the Family that was subsidized by the NMWR and took place in November 2000. A shelter for battered women and a special fund for Legal Aid to victims of family violence have been set up. Both are run by an NGO and are subsidized by the Government.

ARTICLE 6: TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND THE EXPLOITATION OF PROSTITUTION OF WOMEN

84. Cyprus, having the political will to play an active role in combating trafficking in human beings, has proceeded with legislative and administrative measures.

Legislative measures

(a) In the light of forthcoming membership to the EU, Cyprus enacted the Combating of Trafficking of Persons and Sexual Exploitation of Minors Law, 2000 (L. 3(I)/2000) which is in line with the corresponding Joint Action of 24 January 1997 adopted by the Council of the European Union on the basis of Articles K3 of the Treaty on European Union concerning action to combat trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of children.

(b) Law 3(I)/2000 criminalizes such activities, provides for severe punishments as well as for the protection, compensation and rehabilitation of victims and extents the jurisdiction of Cyprus courts. Offences under this Law, including the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children, the use of children for pornography and the production, display, showing or transmission of such productions could be extraditable and could also be predicated offences for the purposes of confiscation of the illicit proceeds, under **the Anti-Money Laundering Law (L. 61(I)/1996,** as amended).

(c) A very important element of **Law 3(I)/2000,** is the appointment of the Director of the Department of Social Welfare as the Guardian of Victims of Sexual Exploitation, who is responsible for the provision of humanitarian support and assistance to the victims, as well as for the channelling of complaints to the competent authorities for investigation.

(d) In line with the new Directives and policies of the EU, the Law Office of the Republic is in the process of preparing two separate laws, one on the Trafficking in Human Beings and the other on the Sexual Exploitation of Children.

85. The Protection of Witnesses Law, 2001 (L. 95(I)/2001) was enacted in June 2001, corresponding to EU Resolutions of 23 November 1995 on the protection of witnesses in the fight against international organized crime, and of 20 December 1996 on individuals who co-operate in the fight against organized crime.

86. The Court before which any proceedings take place, is empowered to take measures to protect any vulnerable witnesses needing protection from all forms of direct or indirect threat, pressure or intimidation. Such measures include the exclusion of the public from the courtroom and providing for a witness needing protection to give his /her testimony in circumstances which will allow such a witness not to face the accused (by the use of a special partition or a closed television circuit).

87. Alignment with the acquis communautaire and international law is an ongoing process. For this reason the existing legal framework regarding combating trafficking in all its forms (smuggling of migrants, sexual exploitation, forced labour etc.) is undergoing amendments in order to implement the provisions of the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols, which Cyprus ratified by Law 11(III)/2003.

88. **Administrative measures**

(a) The Government of Cyprus, recognizing the seriousness and complexity of the issue and also taking into consideration the Country's vulnerability to illegal trafficking of women due to its cross continent geographical location and the need for multidisciplinary approach, has established a Monitoring Unit for combating trafficking and sexual exploitation of human beings.

(b) By its Decision No. 54.281, dated 19.9.2001, the Council of Ministers, at the request of the Attorney-General of the Republic, decided the setting up of a group of experts (Monitoring Unit) to coordinate action on the issue of combating trafficking of persons and sexual exploitation of minors. The Unit consists of the representatives of the following:

- The Law Office of the Republic (Criminal Section, European Union Section).
- Unit for combating money laundering (MOKAS).
- Ministry of Justice and Public Order.
- Ministry of Interior (Immigration Service).
- Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (Social Welfare Services).

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Police.
- NGOs.

(c) The primary purpose of the Unit is the monitoring of the several actions taken in this field on the operational, legislative and preventative level as well as the cooperation with NGOs. It is primarily responsible for the implementation of the law and for the formulation of relevant policy. The Unit is now in the process of drafting a National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Human Beings based on the Brussels Declaration of 2000.

Interministerial co-operation

89. At the policy level, the Ministry of Interior (Migration Department), Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (Welfare Department), Ministry of Justice and Public Order (the Cyprus Police), and the Law Office of the Republic, co-operate closely for the adoption of operational measures and strategy aiming at the effective implementation of the relevant legislation.

90. At the operational level, the institutions responsible for the implementation of the laws and policies are the following:

- The Law Office of the Republic (Unit for Combating Money Laundering).
- Ministry of Justice and Public Order
- Ministry of Interior (Department of Civil Registry and Migration)
- Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (Welfare Services)
- Ministry of Finance (Department of Customs and Excise)
- Cyprus Police and more specific the following departments:
- Criminal Investigation Department
- Crime Intelligence Unit
- Crime Statistics Unit
- Aliens and Immigration Department
- Crime Prevention Office

91. **Police**

(a) The operational measures taken by the Police, include the following:

- Strict enforcement of the existing legislation

- Passport and operational control
- Frequent visits by Police Officers to entertainment establishments in order to ensure application and observation of provisions of the contract employment
- Provision of information in the form of leaflets, in a number of languages, concerning their rights as employees, to women working in places that are considered to be of risk regarding sexual exploitation and providing contact numbers in case of need.
- Strengthening the control at borders.

(b) Cyprus has signed a number of bilateral agreements with other countries, especially the neighbouring countries and Central and Eastern European countries for regional and international Police co-operation concerning organized crime, exchange of information, border control, illegal immigration, trafficking of human beings.

(c) The Cyprus Police works in close co-operation with Interpol, FBI and other European and International Law Enforcement Agencies as well as foreign Police Liaison Officers, for the collection and exchange of information and data regarding various forms of crime, including trafficking and exploitation of human beings.

(d) Cyprus has established a liaison office with the CIREFI Office (exchange of information concerning illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings) at the Police Headquarters. To this framework, an Early Warning System has also been established at Cyprus Police Headquarters for direct exchange of information with other member states and acceding countries to the European Union. Furthermore, the Statistical Data Office at the Cyprus Police Headquarters is responsible for collecting, analysing, evaluating, and exchanging information regarding border control.

(e) The Cyprus Police has established the European Union and International Police Co-operation Directorate which is responsible fc the close co-operation with other European and International Law Enforcement Agencies (such as OSCE, Interpol, Europol, F.B.I. etc), for the collection and evaluation of intelligence and data regarding trafficking and exploitation of human beings.

(f) The Police has close cooperation with NGOs, including the Cyprus Family Planning Association and the Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family.

NGOs

92. Specialized NGOs, such as the Immigration Support Action Group, collaborate closely with competent authorities, especially the Welfare Department and the Police in providing humanitarian assistance to women victims and in defending their rights.

Prevention Strategy

93. The competent authorities implement preventive measures, including the following:

- the number of visas issued for the purpose of working in places, which are considered to be of high risk, is limited;
- migrant workers are informed beforehand of their rights provided in the contract of employment;
- frequent checks are made at suspicious areas in relation to the living conditions, and conditions of employment of migrant workers;
- limited validity of work permits. Performer's permits are valid for a 6-month period only and the individuals concerned may reenter Cyprus only after residing at least 6 months abroad.

94. **Ombudsman**

(a) The Commissioner of Administration (Ombudsman) has recently conducted, ex proprio motu, an investigation regarding the status of entrance and employment of alien women who come to Cyprus to work as "cabaret artists".

(b) The report with the findings of the Ombudsman, including her conclusions and suggestions, has been submitted to the Government and has been widely publicized.

(c) The Ministers of Interior, Justice and Public Order and Labour and Social Security are studying the report with a view to proceed with additional concrete measures, given the strong political message sent by the President of the Republic that the Government will address effectively this problem and will deal with all relevant issues, taking into account the conclusions and suggestions of the Ombudsman.

ARTICLE 7: POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE

Women at Higher Levels of Government

95. Despite the increasing numbers of women actively involved in politics, women are underrepresented in the Government. There is today only 1 woman among the 11 Cabinet ministers, the Minister of Health, and there was another woman Minister appointed in 1993, the Minister of Education and Culture.

(a) Political appointments at high-ranking posts have been filled by women for the first time, an important development, which opens the way to role models for women. In particular, these appointments include the Law Commissioner, the Commissioner for Administration (Ombudsman), the Auditor-General, the Deputy Accountant-General of the Republic, and the Commissioner for the Protection of Personal Data. For the first time, a woman holds position in the Public Education Commission (a five-member Commission).

(b) The presence of women at all levels of the professional staff within the Civil Service has also increased with their participation reaching the level of 37% in the entire Civil Service and the percentage of women's participation in the senior officials category increased from 5% in 1995, to 14% in 1999, to 21% in 2001 and to 28.81% in 2003 (September 2003).

(c) At present, (August 2003), 25 women are members of the Boards of Semi-Government Organizations (that is Boards appointed by the Government) out of 165 members, representing 15,15%. However, some Boards still appear to be 'men's clubs'. For instance, there has never been a female member of the Board of the Central Bank of Cyprus.

96. **Women in Elected Positions**

Parliamentary Elections 2001

97. The interest among women to claim a seat in Parliament has been constantly increasing. In the 1991 elections, there were only 31 women candidates, in 1996 there were 56 and in 2001 there were 85. The increase is, partly, due to new party formations and thus an increase in Parliamentary candidate numbers on the whole. Despite the interest, in the 1991 and the 1996 elections, 3 women were elected and in 2001, 6 women. No woman has yet held the office of President of the House of Representatives.

Table: Representation of Women in Parliamentary Elections

Year	Women Candidates	Elected Women Candidates	Percentage
1991	31	3	5.4%
1996	56	3	5.4%
2001	85	6	10.7%

Local Elections 2001

98. At the local level there are 74 women Municipal Councilors and members of other local area governing bodies out of a total of 398 (19%) compared to 66 women out of 384 (17%) in the previous Local Government elections in 1996. There is, today, 1 woman Mayor out of a total of 33 (3%) compared to 4 women Mayors (12%) in 1996.

99. The President of the Republic of Cyprus as well as Political Party Leaders and Women's Organizations have declared their full support to a further balancing out in women's participation in decision making and politics in order to meet the goal of a minimum 30% representation of women before 2005 as set by the Beijing Platform of Action, which resulted in the political appointments referred to in paragraph 103.

100. A recent research has shown that both male and female Cypriot voters seem not to fully trust women yet, who remain 'invisible', for a variety of reasons. Another research carried out by the

Women's Organization of the United Democrats Party reveals that the main reason for the low representation and participation of women in politics is due to the conservative traditional features of the Cyprus society. The education system, the media, as well as the family are not at all supportive and encouraging to women's efforts to enter the political scene.

Women and Legislature

101. Although women are not represented in the Supreme Court, the percentage of women judges in the courts below has been constantly increasing. While there were no women judges in 1980, they constituted 5.3% of all judges in 1990, 15.2% in 1995, 21.7% in 2000 and 26.4% in 2003.

Measures to increase women's participation in political and public life

102. The Government, through the National Machinery for Women's Rights, has taken a set of measures to increase women's participation in political and public life. These include, inter alia, training seminars on issues such as 'Women in Politics' (see under Article 3 of the Convention, hereinabove).

103. Women branches of political parties have organized bicommunal seminars for women to promote awareness on political issues, for example a seminar organized jointly by political parties of the two Communities, in September 2003, to discuss the political solution proposed by the Annan Plan.

104. NGOs have been in recent years very active in promoting the participation of women in political and public life, and to this end, they have organized campaigns and seminars, as for example the Cyprus Federation of Business and Professional Women who, have organized in 2003 events to support women candidates from all political parties.

105. The NMWR, in view of the May 2001 Parliamentary elections, had launched a public campaign to support women candidates. The campaign included:

- strong political statements by the Minister of Justice and Public Order (President of the NMWR), during various public events to support women's election;
- contact with the leaders of political parties requesting their full and practical support to increase the number of women in the candidate lists and also for their election;
- contacts with the mass media to give equal opportunities to women candidates during the pre-election period;
- posters and advertisements with the slogan 'Give Voice and Power to Women';
- a very broad circulation of a booklet presenting all women candidates (their CVs and political aspirations);

- organization of a special event under the auspices of the Minister of Justice and Public Order to honor all women candidates in the presence of the mass media representatives in which a special film was shown;

- preparation of lists with the names, addresses and other details of all candidates distributed widely to facilitate contacts and networking;

- collaboration with a radio station of pancyprian coverage (Radio Athena) through a daily programme on 'Women in Political Life' where all women candidates were given the opportunity to present themselves to the public.

106. **Political Parties**

(a) Three of the political parties have introduced the quota system to favor the participation of women in their decision-making bodies and candidate lists.

(b) More specifically, the quota system in the Statutes of the Democratic Rally provides for a minimum participation of 20% for women in all collective bodies and candidate lists. This percentage is to increase to 30% by the year 2005.

(c) A similar provisions exists in the Statutes of the Social-Democrats Movement and the United Democrats Party where the quota system of a minimum participation rate of 25% for women in all their decision-making bodies has been introduced.

Women in the Armed Forces

107. **Military service is still not compulsory for women, as opposed to men.**

(a) The Ministry of Defence has submitted to Parliament a bill providing for voluntary military service of women, which is still pending before Parliament. There are widespread objections and reservations, including from women organizations and civil society at large.

(b) However, In the Army of the Republic, 43 women officers and 269 non-commissioned officers, are now serving in permanent posts. Moreover, 313 women non-commissioned officers are serving on a 3 year contract, which is renewable.

(c) As from the academic year 2000-2001 women have the right to compete for entrance in the Highest Military Training Institutions.

(d) The **Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002)** gives women, inter alia, equal rights with men in applying for vacant positions in the Armed Forces.

108. **Women in the Police**

(a) During the last 10 years an increased number of women is employed in the Police. In 1993 the number of women officers in Cyprus Police was 97. Today, out of a total number of 5,500 police officers, the number of women is 679 (i.e. 12.35%).

(b) Moreover, in 2003 there were 71 women commission and non-commission officers (59 Sergeants, 6 Inspectors, 4 Chief Inspectors, 2 Superintended B') compared to a considerably lower number in 1993.

(c) In addition, the Chief of Cyprus Police has appointed women officers in important positions (Director of National Office Bureau of Interpol, Vice Director of European Union and International Police Cooperation Directorate, Vice Director of Research and Development Department etc.).

(d) The **Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002)** gives women, inter alia, equal rights with men in applying for vacant positions, in the Police.

ARTICLE 8: REPRESENTATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

109. The representation of women in the Foreign Service of the Republic of Cyprus has improved drastically. Whereas, there was only 1 woman ambassador until 1995, 9 women have been appointed to ambassadorial posts since; Further, whereas there were only 11 women diplomats until 1995, at present there are 27 out of the total number of 137, constituting 19.7% of the Diplomatic service. Furthermore, 2 women are at present heading Directorates in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, namely, the Political Affairs Division/Cyprus Question and the Political Affairs Division/Bilateral Relations.

ARTICLE 9: NATIONALITY

110. Significant amendments have been introduced, eliminating legal discrimination relating to the acquisition of citizenship among women and men. More specifically, **the Republic of Cyprus Citizenship Law, 1967 (L. 43/1967)** was amended **by Law 168(I)/2001**, granting Cypriot women equal rights regarding the citizenship of their children. Parallel to the preparation of the bill, the Government proceeded with the withdrawal of the single reservation on Article 9, paragraph 2 of the CEDAW. The Instrument of Withdrawal of Reservation was submitted to the Office of the Legal Affairs of the UN (Treaty Section) on the 28th of June 2000. The matter is now governed by **the Civil Registry Law, 2002 (L. 141(I)/2002),** section 109(3), which repealed and substituted **the Republic of Cyprus Citizenship Law**.

ARTICLE 10: EDUCATION

111. The Ministry of Education and Culture is focused on ensuring equal opportunities in education for both genders on a non-discriminatory basis, both in the urban and in the rural areas, and, at the same time, at all levels of education. Education is free from the age $5^{8/12}$–18 (i.e. primary education and secondary – Gymnasium and Lyceum) and compulsory from the age of $5^{8/12}$ until the age of 15 (i.e. primary education and secondary at Gymnasium level).

112. The Ministry of Education and Culture is preparing an Action Plan for the academic year 2004-2005, for the provision of free and compulsory education to children aged of $4^{8/12}$ (i.e. preprimary level).

Women in Decision-Making

(a) During the period under review there was 1 woman Minister of Education. At present, the Director of Culture Services is a woman. However, there has been no Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, nor any director of any of the Departments of the Education. (Primary Education, Secondary General Education, Secondary Vocational Education, and Higher Education), notwithstanding the fact that 71% of the teaching staff at primary and secondary level of the education are women.

(b) Nevertheless:

- In 1998, a woman was appointed member of the Public Education Service Commission for the first time. The ratio is 1 woman to 4 men.
- In the Education Council, the ratio is 5 women to 25 men.
- In the Council of the University of Cyprus, the ratio is 1 woman to 14 men.
- In 2002, 2 women, were elected to the Board of POED. (Primary School Teachers' Organization). In the year 2003, this number was doubled.
- In 2003, 2 women were elected for the first time, to the Board of OEDE (Primary Inspectors Association), bringing the ratio to 2:5.
- 2 women are members in the Central Council of OELMEK (Secondary General Education Teachers' Organization) (ratio 2:19), In the district councils of OELMEK, the ratio is 11:38.
- 2 women (ratio 2:19), are in the Central Council of OLTEK (Secondary Vocational School Teachers' Organization), 1 of whom is the president. The vast majority of teaching staff in secondary vocational schools is men.

113. According to a research, factors hindering the promotion of female educators are: grading, additional qualifications, interview results. According to the Ministry's grading system, teachers receive a grade between 33 and 39. Whereas the majorities (55%) of male educators receive the grade 39, the majority of female educators (51%) receive 34-35. Men receive higher scores than women in professional training, professional competency, organization/ administration/ human relationships, general attitude and action. Men also score higher than women in personal interviews for positions of promotion. Women teachers posses less additional qualifications than their male counterparts.

Pre-primary Education

114. The ratio between boys and girls aged 3 – 5 $^{8/12}$ years old, enrolled in the kindergartens, for the years 2000 – 2003, is as follows:

Table 1: Children enrolled in kindergartens

ACADEMIC YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN	PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS
2000/2001	10.004	47,7%
2001/2002	9.733	49,2%
2002/2003	9.390	49,3%

115. The Ministry of Education and Culture in an effort to change attitudes and stereotypes on gender roles, encourages children to perform non-traditional role-play. For instance, girls play the role of track drivers, while boys sew and cook. However, kindergarten's teaching, is still considered a female domain. This is reflected in the proportion of male and female kindergarteners. In 1998, there were only 18 male kindergarteners compared to 1095 female (96.4%). Out of the 142 principal positions, women held 138 (97.2%).

Primary Education

116. Primary education in Cyprus is compulsory (from age 5 $^{8/12}$).

Table 2: Children enrolled in primary education.

ACADEMIC YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN	PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS
2000/2001	63.387	48,6%
2001/2002	63.516	48,7%

117. The endeavors of the Ministry of Culture and Education to enhance non-discriminatory gender education include, inter alia, the revision of textbooks used in schools and the introduction of the school subject of 'Domestic Science' –scientific and technological knowledge and achievements- to both boys and girls. Relevant data show that both girls and boys attend the subject with equal success.

118. In 2000/2001, female teachers in primary education represented 74% of all teachers. The percentage of female teachers holding principal and assistant principal's positions increased from 46% in 1998/1999 to 53% in 2000/2001.

Secondary Education

119. Secondary education in Cyprus is compulsory for the first 3 grades until the age of 15 (Gymnasium level). There is a balanced representation of boys and girls in secondary education institutions.

120. However, there is still a clear gender differential among students who enrol in technical secondary schools, where there is a majority of male students. Girls enrolled in technical secondary schools seem to prefer sectors such as fashion design.

(a) In high schools, the 15-year old students are introduced to subject, such as communication and gender relations. Moreover, in the framework of the unified Lycea (15-18 years of age) high school students attend courses of Family Conduct as well as Infant and Child Care.

(b) A pilot programme for 15 years old students on sexual education has been introduced in 2003 in a number of Gymnasia, in urban and rural areas.

121. The Association for the Prevention and Combating Violence in the Family organizes yearly seminars for students.

122. Women's participation at the decision making level in the secondary education is lower than in the primary education. In 1998/9, 54% of secondary teachers were women. The percentage increased slightly to 55% in the year 2000/01. The percentage of female teachers holding principal's positions increased from 27% in 1998/99 to 30% in 2000/01.

Table 3: Percentage of Women and Decision-Making in Education.

Level of Education	All staff		Principals		Assistant Principals	
	1998/99	2000/01	1998/99	2000/01	1998/99	2000/01
Pre-Primary	99%	98%	98%	95%*	100%	*
Primary	73%	74%	46%*	53%*	*	*
Secondary	54%	55%	27%	30%	42%	42%

* Assistant Principals reported together with Principals

123. Discrepancies in the represenation of the two genders in higher promotion positions as inspector and senior officer are also observed.

Table 4: Promotion Positions (Inspectors/ Senior Officers) 1999/2000

Position	Primary		Secondary	
	M	F	M	F
Inspector	89%	11%	70%	30%
Senior Officer	67%	33%	100%	0%

124. Cyprus has a high proportion of tertiary education graduates. In 2001, 38,1% of Cypriots aged 30-34 held tertiary education qualifications, whereas the average in the European Union in 2000 for the same ages was only 24,6%. (European Commission, 2002).

125. The percentage of women studying in tertiary education institutions in Cyprus and abroad increased from 50% in 1994/95 to 57% in 2001/2002. In the academic year 2001/02, there were more female students (15,835) registered in tertiary education institutions in Cyprus and abroad than male students (12,974).

126. Some fields of study seem to have remained gender segregated. For example, in the academic year 2001/02, 80% of the students registered in Education and 79% of the students enrolled in Humanities and Arts were women, whereas 79% of the students in the Engineering, Manufacturing, and Constructions program were men.

127. With the exception of the School of Nursing, the majority of the teaching staff in tertiary education establishments is male.

Table 5: Teaching Staff in Tertiary Education Institutions 2000/01

Institution	Men	Women
University of Cyprus	75%	25%
Police Academy	90%	10%
School of Nursing	27%	73%
Higher Technological Institute	82%	18%
Higher Hotel Institute	61%	39%
Forestry College	100%	0%
Mediterranean Inst. of Management	60%	40%

128. The University of Cyprus, as well as private colleges, in particular "Intercollege", have exhibited a considerable amount of research on women's issues.

(a) The University, offers courses or modules such as 'Issues of Equality and Gender', 'History of Women's Education in Cyprus', 'Three Generations, Two Genders, One World' etc. Moreover, faculty members are engaged in research on gender issues. Finally, the University has adopted the Declaration on Equal Opportunities in the framework of the UNICA network and organized a number of seminars, lectures etc. on gender issues.

(b) "Intercollege", which has a strong record of researching gender issues, such as 'Women Managers', 'Women Entrepreneurs', 'Women in the Tourist Industry', 'Women in Conflict' etc., has recently established the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies. The Institute is a

non-profit research-oriented organization. It aims, inter alia, at making recommendations on policy and practices on gender issues as well as to increase awareness on of gender issues in Cyprus civil society etc.

Adult Education

129. Adult education is addressed to both genders and classes are mixed. Though the number of women attending adult classes, is higher than that of men, very few women register in subjects such as car mechanics, plumbers etc.

Women and Vocational Training

130. The Human Resources Development Authority (HRDA) is mainly responsible for the workforce training, which is provided on a non-discriminatory basis. This is reflected in women's high participation (over 40%) for a number of years. In particular, during the year 2002, 4549 (52.2%) of the 8708 people who took part in the HRDA training courses were women. HRDA offers a variety of courses in collaboration with tertiary education institutions. HRDA has initiated a number of studies on women in the workforce, inactive women etc.

ARTICLE 11: EMPLOYMENT

131. Measures and actions for the promotion of gender equality in the field of employment include the following:

- The improvement and upgrading of the facilities offered to employed parents in order to reconcile work and family life. Priorities include the expansion and improvement of child-care facilities (though a Government grant scheme to NGOs providing such facilities) and the provision of special allowances to working people with elderly parents at home in order to secure daily care for them.

- The encouragement of women to participate in initial and continuing training programmes and to enter new fields of occupations. The Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus allows no discrimination on the basis of sex or other characteristics in access to training.

- Improvement of the legal framework on equality through the legislative transposition of the acquis communautaire and its effective implementation.

132. In addition to the above measures, the Government, jointly with the European Commission, prepared in 2001, the "Joint Assessment of Employment Priorities in Cyprus", for the purpose of enabling Cyprus to participate in the European Employment Strategy. Among the priorities listed is raising employment and reducing unemployment for women, together with a reduction in gender gaps both in pay and in access to higher occupations in line with the EU strategy. In particular, it provides that, every effort should be made to speed up the implementation of planned gender equality measures. Particularly important will be increased access for women to training and retraining programmes; full implementation of the acquis communautaire in relation to both equal pay and equal

opportunities; support for family-friendly employment patterns and practices; and efforts to raise awareness on equality issues.

Women and Economic Activity

133. In Cyprus, women's status and position in economic life has improved significantly during the last years. Women have benefited most from the increase in employment during the last decade, narrowing the gap between male and female employment rates.

134. Female employment, according to the Labour Force Survey, accounted for almost 44% of total employment, in 2002, whereas in 1990 women accounted for 38% of total employment.

135. In 2002, employment rates[2] for both men and women reaching a level of 68,5% as compared to 64,6%[3] in 1992. The female employment rate (59%) was still lower than the male employment rate (78,8%). The gender gap decreased to 19,8 percentage points in 2002, from 30,6 percentage points in 1992 (the female employment rate was 49,6% and the male employment rate 80,2%). This decrease was the result of the declining trend exhibited by the male employment rates and the increasing trend of female employment rates.

136. The difference between male and female employment rates appears to be small amongst the younger age group of 15-24 years, estimated, in 2002, at 2 percentage points, but this gap increases to 21 percentage points amongst the persons aged 25-54 and further increases to 35 percentage points for the older age group (55-64). In 1992, the respective differences were 2,1 percentage points, 30,6 percentage points and 50,9 percentage points.

137. The services sectors absorbed in 2002 the 84% of the female employment and the 62% of the male. Almost 50% of the employed women are concentrated in the sectors of trade, hotels and restaurants, manufacturing and education, while almost 58% of the male employment is concentrated in the sectors of manufacturing, construction, trade and public administration.

138. The continuous increase of the educational level of both male and female employed resulted to a rising share of employment in higher skilled occupations, such as managers, professionals and technicians, to total employment. In 1992, employment in these occupations accounted for 25,1% of the total employment (25,9% of the male employment and 23,9% of the female employment). In 2002, the employment share in these occupations increased to 28,2% of total employment (28,2% of the male employment and 28,4% of the female employment.

139. The representation of women in higher skilled occupations, improved during the period 1992-2002 by 8,3 percentage points. In particular, in 1992, according to the Census of Population, female employment accounted for 36,1% of all those working in these occupations, while in 2002 this proportion increased to 44,3%.

[2] Measured here as employment of people aged 15-64 as a proportion of the population aged 15-64, according to the Labour Force Survey.

[3] Source: The Census of Population 1992, Vol. III: Labour Force.

140. The educational level of the workforce has been rising during the last years, with the share of employment with tertiary education reaching the level of 31,7% in 2000, from 23,0% 1992. The number of employed women with tertiary education as a percentage of total female employment reached a level of almost 35% in 2002 from 26,1% in 1992.

141. Flexible forms of employment, such as part-time and temporary work have not developed much. In particular, part time employment accounted for 7,2% of total employment, in 2002. Part-time employment appears to be more popular amongst the female employed population where, in 2002, 11,3% of employed women were working on a part-time basis, compared to 4,0% of the male employed population. In 1995, according to the Census of Establishments, female part-time workers accounted for 8,8% of the total female population, whereas male part-time workers for 7,2%. Temporary work accounted for 7,0% of total employment in 2002, while the proportion of women in temporary work to total employment of women was 10,8%.

142. Particularly related to women's economic activity is the drop in the fertility rate. As Cyprus society has adapted to the needs of modern life, the total fertility rate[4] dropped from 2,4 in 1990 to 2,0 in 1995 and to just 1.5 in the year 2002. The drop in the fertility rate is also related to the furthering of education, which frequently results in marriages and bearing children later in life. While in 1990 the average age of women was 24,1 years old when they first got married, in 2002, the average age of women when they first got married was 26,6. Indicative is also the number of live births for mothers aged under 20. It dropped from 708 in 1990 to 413 in 1995 and to 173 in 2002. At the same time, the mean age of women at the birth of the first child has been increasing. It grew from 24,7 in 1990 to 25,5 in 1995 to 26,7 in 2002.

Unemployment

143. With an unemployment rate of about 3-4%[5], Cyprus actually enjoys conditions of 'full employment'. The percentages of unemployed women have always been slightly higher than that of their male counterparts, a phenomenon occurring in many countries. In 1999 and in 2002, for example, 73% and 56% respectively of newcomers registered unemployed were women. Moreover, women seem to constitute the majority of the long term unemployed[6]. In 1990 long term unemployed women formed 55%, whereas this percentage increased to 59% in the year 1995 and 63% in 2002.

[4] Total fertility rate is the average number of children that would be born alive to a woman during her lifetime if she were to pass through her childbearing years conforming to the age-specific fertility rates of a given year.

[5] With unemployed, we mean persons registered as unemployed and looking for work at the District Labour Offices on the last day of each month. It includes these persons who receive unemployment benefits from the Social Insurance Fund as well as those not entitled to any benefits.
The numbers are given with some reservation as a considerable number of university or school graduates do not opt to register as unemployed during their quest for employment. This might be partly due to ignorance of their right to do so, or because the benefits in their case are considerably lower.

[6] Long-term unemployed are people who have been unemployed for a period of 12 months or longer.

Table 1: Registered Unemployment Persons by Sex

Year	Total	Male	Female
1996	3,1%	2,3%	4,3%
1997	3,4%	2,6%	4,6%
1998	3,3%	2,9%	4,1%
1999	3,6%	2,9%	4,6%
2000	3,4%	2,9%	4,4%
2001	2,9%	2,3%	3,8%
2002	3,1%	2,5%	3,9%

Remuneration Rates

144. The problem of pay gap has been constantly decreasing. In 1981, the discrepancy in the earnings between men and women was as high as 72.6%. The difference decreased to 50.7% in 1992, to 36.2% in 1998 and is expected to decrease even further. The difference is the narrowest for legislators, senior officials, and managers and the widest for machine operators (for instance, in 1999, male average monthly rates of pay were 744 Cyprus pounds compared to 445 Cyprus pounds for their female counterparts) and skilled agricultural and fishery workers.

Table 2: Remuneration Rates by Sex

Year	Average	Male	Female	Ratio of Female to Male Earnings
1995	648	738	521	71%
1996	669	759	546	72%
1997	708	797	583	73%
1998	736	822	611	74%
1999	771	860	631	73%
2000	826	920	682	74%
2001	868	967	717	74%

145. It is evident from the table above that the gap in the remuneration rates had been gradually closing in the years 1995 to 1998 with a slight set back in 1999, but recovering again in 2000.

146. Although women today constitute over 40% of the labour force, their presence is not evenly distributed in all sectors and levels, and this is evident by many factors. Firstly, there seems to be job

segmentation. Women tend, for instance, to do more clerical work. Almost 3 out of 4 clerks were women in 1999. Secondly, they are underrepresented in decision-making positions. Hence, women are more frequently found in low-salaried jobs.

147. Despite the discouraging overall difference in male and female earnings, women's quest for employment has increased mainly because of the growth and development of the economy and the creation of new employment opportunities especially, in the services sector. Two other reasons played a significant role: (i) the increase in female wages, even if these are still lower in certain areas than the ones of their male counterparts and (ii) women's rising education level.

148. **Decision-Making in the Economic Sector**

(a) Women in Cyprus have played an increasingly important role in economic activity over that last 20 years. Factors, such as, relatively high rates of economic growth, low unemployment rates, as well as the improvement in education and training, and in the terms and conditions of employment have had positive effects not only on women's labour force participation rates, but also on their representation in the various occupations and sectors of economic activity.

(b) Significant changes have taken place as regards women's entry into decision-making positions in the last 10 years. Specifically, although we have not experienced significant quantitative changes, women have started to enter very high ranking positions – both in the public and private sector – that a decade ago were predominantly occupied by men (e.g. directors in management boards, government directors, director – generals etc.).

Public Sector

149. According to latest available statistics, women account for more than 50% in public service employment totalling 53.5% of white-collar public servants. Women's percentage continues to be low in the higher grades compared to men despite a reverse course in progress. In 1992, out of a total of 479 public servants in the higher pay brackets of A13-A16 scales, men held 419 posts, and only 60 were held by women (12%). In 2001, this percentage increased to 23.8% and in 2003, to 28, 8%.

150. A comparative trend can be observed in trade union involvement. In 1996, 42.3% of PASYDY (the Cyprus Public Servants Union) members were women. This percentage increased to 45.3% in 2001. Women's participation in the Conference of Delegates increased from 13.4% in 1996 to 19.4% in 2001. Similarly, women's participation in the General Council increased from 10.9% in 1996 to 12.4 in 2001. Moreover, the percentage of women in the Executive Committee rose from 4.8% in 1996 to 9.5 % in 2001.

151. **Entrepreneurial Activity**

(a) In 1995, about 58.000 enterprises were registered in the Census of Establishments out of which approximately 7.000 were women-owned. This means that women owned almost 12% of the enterprises in Cyprus. In the same year, 117.000 women were actively employed. In other words, the number of women who were self-employed or employers was about 6%.

(b) Female business ownership in Cyprus (12%) is low compared to 37% in the US and 27% in the EU. To enhance enterprising development among women, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism introduced in March 2002 the Scheme on Female Entrepreneurship, which subsidizes the costs entailed in setting up a woman-owned company up to 50%.

(c) A research, subsidized by the NMWR, on Female Entrepreneurial Activity in Cyprus indicated that 2 out of 3 women entrepreneurs in Cyprus start up their business in their twenties. The main influencing factor behind this decision is the desire for control and decision-making. In addition, 4 out of 10 women set up a company without having any previous employment, which would allow them to gather experience and part of the starting capital. Hence, it is observed that women are driven towards developing entrepreneurial activity; their inexperience and lack of relevant studies (only 2% have a background in business administration/ economics), however, is likely to turn their efforts to a 'hit or miss'. The financial conditions of 1 in 3 of the respondents improved as a result of their entrepreneurial activity.

(d) Almost all women-owned businesses (99%) are micro-enterprises (i.e. they employ less than 10 employees). This is not surprising, as almost 95% of all Cyprus companies fall in the same category. 69% of women entrepreneurs are merely self-employed, particularly women with primary education (85%). Investing on average 50 to 60 hours per week in their company, they can be classified as full-time entrepreneurs. The main form of business ownership is that of sole proprietorship (85%), which allows complete control.

(e) Furthermore, there is strong segmentation in traditionally 'female' activity sectors: the clothing and shoe industry, the medical and paramedical professions, the kiosks and mini markets, the trade of gifts, hairdressers and florists. Moreover, 96% of women-owned businesses do business only in their local community or town. To empower women enter new fields of the economy making use of the latest technology, the Scheme on Female Entrepreneurship in Cyprus encourages business development in activity sectors other than the stereotypically 'female' ones, preferably using technology (e.g. e-commerce etc.).

(f) Financial support is by far the strongest concern. Other concerns recorded were: family-friendly opening hours, counselling access to information/furthering education, and childcare support. We can also add the reconciliation of entrepreneurial activity and family life as well as the need for mentoring and role models.

National Pensionable Age

152. The pensionable age is 65 for both men and women.

153. **Equal Treatment in Employment/Training**

(a) As already referred to in the Present Report, the Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002), came into force, on 1/1/2003, harmonizing with Directive 76/207/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion and working conditions, as well as certain provisions of the revised Directive 2002/73/EC.

(b) The purpose of Law 205(I)/2002 is the application of the principle of equal treatment of men and women as regards access to vocational guidance, vocational education and training as well as terms and conditions of their provision, access to employment, terms and conditions of employment and working conditions, including promotion and terms and conditions of dismissal. The Law applies to all workers with regard to all activities related to employment, excluding those occupational activities laid down in a schedule and specifying the specific reasons of exception, where sex constitutes a determining factor. Pursuant to the Law, men and women must enjoy equal treatment, without any direct or indirect discrimination on grounds of sex in relation to the relevant fields and in particular due to pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, maternity or illness due to pregnancy or childbirth. The Law expressly provides that "positive action" is consistent with, and serves the purpose thereof.

(c) Law 205(I)/2002 covers the issue of sexual harassment at the workplace. Under the Law, any act that constitutes sexual harassment or causes direct or indirect discriminatory treatment, in relation to the relevant fields, is prohibited and the employers and representatives of legal entities or bodies corporate must abstain from any such act, whether isolated or repeated. They have a duty to protect the employees, trainees, or candidates for employment, vocational education or training, from any act of their superiors, or colleagues and also to take all appropriate measures against sexual harassment and to ensure it does not re-occur.

(d) Law 205(I)/2002 provides for the establishment of a Gender Equality Committee, with an advisory role, which will be responsible for considering matters falling within the scope of the Law. The Committee will, inter alia, supervise the implementation of the Law, promote studies and research relevant to matters falling within its competence, advise any person interested free of charge on matters relating to equality of men and women and submit, on its own motion, complaints or accept complaints, which will then forward to the Chief Inspector (specially appointed for the purpose of the Law) for proper handling.

(e) Pursuant to Law 205(I)/2002, any person who intentionally does not comply with the provisions of the Law is guilty of an offence and is punishable with a fine or imprisonment or both.

154. **Equal Pay**

(a) The Equal Pay Between Men and Women for Work of Equal Value Law, 1989 (L.158/1989) was amended during 2000, so as to give power to the Council of Ministers to issue Regulations on various matters. In fact, two sets of Regulations have been issued, concerning:

- The duties and powers of inspectors (Regulations of November 2000); and
- The terms of reference of the technical committee that may be appointed by the Labour Disputes Court to advise it on equality cases (Regulations of March 2001).

(b) Furthermore, a "Guide" has been prepared on the meaning of the term "work of like or similar nature" (a term used in the Law) for use by trade unions, employer associations, lawyers and other interest persons.

(c) The Equal Pay between Men and Women for the Same Work or for Work of Equal Value Law, 2002 (L. 177(I)/2002) came into force on 1.1.2003, abolishing the Laws and Regulations mentioned in paragraph 164.

(d) Law 177(I)/2002 harmonizes Cyprus legislation with the provisions of Directive 75/177/EEC, relating to the application of the principle of equal pay between men and women, and Directive 97/80/EC on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex. The Law provides for the safeguarding of equal pay between men and women for the same work, or for work to which equal value is attributed. The Law also provides for the responsibility of the competent authority to request from employers' and employees' organisations to examine the provisions of existing collective agreements, with a view to revoking, or amending any provisions that directly or indirectly include discrimination based on sex. Furthermore, the Law provides for the appointment of inspectors for the enforcement of the Law, and lays out their duties and powers. The Law also lays down specific criteria for the comparison and evaluation of work of equal value, and also provides for the establishment, and terms of reference of a Committee for the Investigation and Assessment of Work.

Social Security

155. Certain gender inequalities, which existed in the State Social Security Scheme were removed by the Social Insurance (Amendment) Law, 2001 (L. 51(I)/2001), harmonizing with Directive 79/7/EEC, on the implementation of the Equal Treatment Principle in matters of Social Security and Directive 86/603/EC extending the principle of equal treatment to self-employed workers and their assisting spouses and generally female. According to the Law, as from 6.10.2001, women beneficiaries are entitled in the same way as men to increases for their spouse, children and other dependants as regards sickness, unemployment and injury benefit, where in the case of old age, invalidity and disablement pension, women are entitled to increases only for their children and other dependants.

Social Pension

156. The Social Pension Law, 1995 (L.25(I)/1995) introduced social pension for men and women that were not covered by any other social security scheme. This affected mainly women (e.g. housewives and self-employed rural women, who were previously excluded from the Social Security Scheme). The Social Pension (Amendment) Law, 2000 (L. 97(I)/2000) provides for the increase of the rate of social pension to 81% of the amount of the full basic pension provided under the Social Insurance Law. Moreover, the age of the entitlement to social pension has changed from 68 to 66 as from 1.1.1999 and to 65 as from 1.1.2000. {(Social Pension (Amendment) Law, 1999 (L. 53 (I)/1999) and Social Pension (Amendment) Law, 2000 (L. 12(I)/2000), respectively}.

Occupational Social Insurance

157. The Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Professional Social Insurance Schemes Law, 2002 (L. 133(I)/2002), harmonizing with Directive 86/378/EC was enacted in 2002 and came into force, on 1.01.2003, providing for the equal treatment between men and women in occupational social insurance schemes.

Protection of Maternity

158. By virtue of the provisions of the Maternity Protection (Amendment) Law, 1994 (L. 48 (I)/1994) the minimum period of maternity leave has been extended to 16 weeks as from 1.1.1997. Moreover, the new Maternity Protection Law (L. 100(I)/1997) was enacted in 1997, consolidating all pre-existing relevant legislation and providing for the extension of the application of its provisions to foster mothers. Out of the total minimum period of 16 weeks of maternity leave, 9 weeks must be taken compulsory during the period beginning the second week before the presumed week of confinement. Law 100(I)/1997 protects women from unlawful dismissal during maternity. The amendment Laws No. 45(I)/2000 and No. 64(I)/2002 further improved the protection of maternity.

159. Furthermore, in order to secure and improve the safety and health of pregnant women and women who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding, The Maternity Protection (Safety and Health at Work) Regulations, 2002 (P.I. (P.I. 255/2002 of 31.5.2002), were issued under the Health and Safety at Work Law, 1996 (L. 89(I)/1996).

160. The Social Insurance (Amendment) Law, 1998 (L. 84(I)/1998) provided for the payment of maternity allowance to an insured woman who has an adopted child, where the adoption takes place during the first five years from the child's birth instead of the first four years as it was the case before. By a further amendment of the said Law in 2001, (L. 2(I)/2001), maternity allowance is payable if the adoption takes place during the first twelve years from the child's birth.

161. **Parental leave**

(a) The Parental Leave and Leave on Grounds of Force Majeure Law, 2002 (L. 69(I)/2002), harmonizing Cyprus' law with Directive 96/34/EC, was enacted in 2002 and came into force on 1.1.2003.

(b) Law 69(I)/2002 gives the right to all employees, men and women, to take unpaid parental leave of up to 13 weeks in total, by reason of the birth or adoption of a child, in order for the parent to take care of the child.

(c) Under Law 69(I)/2002 -

Parental leave shall be taken -

(i) in the case of natural parents, within the period commencing on the day after the expiration of the maternity leave and ending on the 6th anniversary of the child's birth;

(ii) in case of adoption, within a period of 6 years commencing on the date of the adoption and after the maternity leave has been taken, given the child will not be over twelve years old.

(d) An employee may take by way of parental leave in any 1 year a minimum period of 1 week and a maximum period of 4 weeks.

(e) Any employee has the right to take unpaid leave of up to 7 days each year, on grounds of force majeure by reason of a family emergency and related to an illness of, or an accident to, any dependant of the employee which makes the immediate presence of the employee indispensable. Dependant means the spouse, a child, parent, brother, sister or grandparent.

International instruments

162. During the period under review Cyprus has additionally ratified the following instruments:

- The ILO Convention on Part-time Employment No. 175, by Law 6(III)/1997).
- Articles 1 and 20 of the "Revised" European Social Charter of the Council of Europe, on equal opportunities and equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation without discrimination on the grounds of sex, by Law 27(III)/2000.
- The Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ILO Convention No. 182), by Law 31 (III)/2000.

Denunciation of ILO Convention No. 89

163. Cyprus registered with the Director General of the ILO the denunciation of Convention No. 89 and of its Protocol on 2 July 2001 and has proceeded with the abolition of the Night Work (Women) Law, Cap 180, in compliance with the European Union Directive 76/207/EU, which required Member States to abolish or revise any legislation which is contrary to this principle. The denunciation of Convention No. 89 and its Protocol took effect for Cyprus as from 9 July 2002.

164. **Information Seminars**

(a) Trade Unions, the Organisation of Employers and Industrialists, the Chamber of Commerce as well as Women Organisations have organized a plethora of seminars on the issue of protection of maternity, equal pay and equal treatment in employment, many of which have been subsidized by the NMWR.

(b) A workshop on the Equal Pay between Men and Women for the Same Work or for Work of Equal Value Law, 2002 (L. 177(I)/2002), was organized by the Industrial Relations Service, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (December 2003).

ARTICLE 12: HEALTH AND AIDS

165. Health care in Cyprus is provided to all persons without discrimination on the basis of age, sex, religion, ethnicity or other attribute. The standard of living and the quality of health care are high, and this is reflected in the health indicators, which are comparable to those of other developed countries. The expenditure as percentage of the GDP has been constantly increasing. It was 4.47% in 1990, 5.02% in 1995, and 6.04% in 2000. In 2003, 34 women doctors and 98 men doctors were involved in decision making in the area of health.

166. Women enjoy a high level of health with a life expectancy at birth estimated for the period 2000/2001, at 81,0 years, compared to 76,1 years for men. This may be attributed to the fact that women are less subject to the harmful effects of violence, accidents and smoking.

167. Men have higher rates for cancer of the lung than women. In 2001, 51 deaths from lung cancer were recorded for men and 4 for women. For ischaemic heart disease the numbers were 88 deaths for men and 41 for women and for violent causes, 104 for men and 39 for women. Gynaecological cancers and breast cancer are the main cancers affecting women. About 300 cases of breast cancer and 130 cases of female genital cancers are reported each year in Cyprus.

168. Of the 5 general hospitals, the Archbishop Makarios III Hospital (NAMIII) in Nicosia which was put into operation in 1984 is a specialized hospital. Gynaecological and maternity care is provided in this hospital, at the specialized level, in addition to primary and secondary care. This Department functions as a referral centre for all other gynaecological and maternity departments of the general hospitals of other towns, where care is provided at the primary and secondary level.

(a) Specialized services include the following:

- Gynaecological oncology and colposcopy
- Ultrasound and prenatal diagnosis services
- Fertility clinic providing diagnosis and treatment to cases from the private and the public sector, as well as from the occupied part of Cyprus.
- Endoscopic gynaecological surgery.

(b) These services are equally available and accessible to all women in Cyprus, both from the urban and the rural regions. Moreover, a screening programme for the cancers of the breast and the cervix is functioning since 1995, providing these services to the enclaved female population of Cyprus.

169. Specialized Oncology Centre: The "Bank of Cyprus Oncology Centre", a specialized oncology centre, was created following an agreement signed in 1992 between the Cyprus Government and the Bank of Cyprus. The Centre is an independent legal entity providing high-level health services regarding cancer, treatment and medicine, free of charge to all persons.

(a) The mission of the Centre is to:

- Treat cancer with state-of-the-art services.
- Cooperate with public and private hospitals as well as the cancer voluntary organisations.
- Initiate and participate in prevention and early detection programmes.
- Undertake research and foster continuing education for all the professionals working with cancer patients.

- Develop collaborative links with leading oncology institutes in Europe and North America.
- Evolve as a referral centre for neighbouring countries.

(b) The Centre is organised around the departments of Radiation Oncology, Diagnostic Radiology, Nuclear Medicine and Medical Oncology. It offers radiotherapy, chemotherapy, hormone therapy and undertakes diagnostic investigations including blood tests and radiological investigations. Each patient is cared-for by oncologists specialising in particular cancer types – site specialisation.

(c) Since late 1998, the Centre has provided its services to over 2000 new breast cancer cases and over 600 other gynaecological cancer cases. During 2003, out of 1500 new patients registered, nearly 900 were women, which are estimated to account for 60% of all new cancer cases. Over the same twelve month period the Centre patient activity included 21.000 radiotherapy fractions, 4.400 day care chemotherapy sessions, 2.200 inpatient admissions, 19.000 outpatient consultations, 3.500 CT scans and 1.000 nuclear medicine examinations.

(d) During 2003 the Centre's research activity included participation in:

- International multicentre phase III clinical trials.
- The Hellenic Cooperative Oncology group.
- The EORTC lung cancer and Radiotherapy Groups.
- An EU funded telemedicine programme (E-care).

170. In Cyprus deliveries take place in the clinical setting, under specialized care. Maternal deaths are kept at a minimum, with 0 to 1 deaths occurring per year for every 10.000 – 11.000 deliveries. Maternal and child health follow-up services are provided to all women, either through the hospitals, or through outreach urban and rural centres. The uptake both for pre- and post natal care to women and for routine checks of the newborn and the child is extremely high, reaching almost 100%. Vaccination coverage is very high and is equal for both boys and girls.

171. Abortions: Medical termination of pregnancy is allowed under section 169A of the Criminal Code if there is a risk for the physical or mental health of the mother or of any child of the family. Abortions are known to be taking place in Cyprus, though the actual number is not known, since health professionals are reluctant to report them to the authorities. The fact that no deaths or serious complications from abortions are recorded leads to the conclusion that abortions are taking place in specialized institutions, under safe conditions. Nonetheless, in the absence of any official data it is not an easy task to make a sound evaluation of the overall impact of abortions on the physical and psychological health of women. Nevertheless, there is an urgent need for the evaluation of the situation with regard to abortions. The issue will be explored in a behavioural study with regard to AIDS, sex and sexually transmitted diseases which scheduled to be conducted shortly.

172. The problem of low fertility is dealt with by the Government through social, financial and welfare measures and measures aiming at raising the level of sensitization of the population to

the issue. Based on the results of the recent "Study for the Formulation of Demographic Policy – Proposal for Cyprus" further measures are planned. According to these results, the ideal number of children for Cypriots, both men and women, is 3, though in actual practice most families have fewer children. This seems to be due to an array of factors relating to financial constraints, concerns about the future problems of raising children and the challenges facing women in their multiple role as mothers, wives and career makers.

173. Policies and programmes to address women's issues in the field of health include the following:

- The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, has introduced recently an educational programme on healthy nutrition for rural women.

- The programme on maternal and child health has been upgraded and men may now attend the training sessions with their partners. Attendees are prepared so as to be successful in their future role as parents. Pregnant women receive support so as to be psychologically and physically fit to undergo pregnancy and delivery and to have a positive view towards breastfeeding. The programme, which was initially offered only in Nicosia, is now offered in all the other districts as well.

- An important regional seminar was organized by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat on Gender Mainstreaming in the Health Sector in June 2001, aiming at assisting the participants to draft a National Action Plan on Women and Health.

- Peer education programmes are being applied in schools and in non governmental organizations, with the objective of assisting young boys and girls to acquire the necessary attitudes which lead to safe behaviours in relation to sex and infections.

174. The situation with regard to HIV-infection is being monitored through epidemiological surveillance and special behavioural studies.

(a) Important landmarks in the National AIDS Programme for the past decade are as follows:

- In 1994 the epidemiological surveillance was upgraded through the creation of an electronic database that was placed under the care of an epidemiologist.

- Peer education in schools was initiated in 1995. In the same year, the National AIDS Programme started a fruitful cooperation with the Cyprus Girl Guides Association in this area, which has resulted, among others, in the preparation of manuals and board games in Greek and Turkish, for peer education to be used by all relevant stakeholders.

- In 1996, the Cyprus Family Planning Association, in cooperation with the National AIDS Programme, started a health education programme for AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases for the benefit of foreign bar girls, which is still in operation.

- A clinic for AIDS patients was put into operation in Larnaca in 1996.

- In 1996, free combination antiretroviral therapy was introduced, resulting in a drastic drop in the number of cases progressing to AIDS and death.

- A number of behavioural studies with regard to AIDS, sex and sexually transmitted diseases were done as follows:

  - In private secondary schools and tertiary education institutions in 1995-96

  - Among the general population of the Limassol Town and District in 2001

  - Among male customers of night spots in Limassol

  - Among young army recruits in 2002 (included questions on drug use as well).

(b) Cyprus remains a low prevalence country for HIV/AIDS, particularly for women, who are outnumbered by 6 to 1 by men with regard to HIV-infection. This ratio may be even higher, because according to official figures, women have a higher likelihood of being tested if their partner is found to be HIV-positive and therefore more likely to be diagnosed if they are infected. According to the criteria of the World Health Organization, it is estimated that the number of people with HIV-infection among the adult population in Cyprus is not more than 500, and the rate is 0,1%. The main concern for the Ministry of Health has been to prevent the further spread of the epidemic. The National AIDS Programme has continued to be implemented according to the principles of the prevention of the transmission of the virus and the reduction of the social and personal consequences of HIV-infection.

(c) Perinatal transmission is kept at extremely low levels. This is due partly to the low prevalence of HIV-infection in women, and partly to the measures taken for the prevention of perinatal transmission of the virus in the isolated cases of pregnant women who are found to be positive. All pregnant women are offered testing and counseling for HIV and all seropositive pregnant women are provided with free drug regimens and advice aiming to prevent the transmission of the virus to their babies.

(d) A new strategic plan for AIDS has been prepared for the period 2004-2008 and is based on the same principles which have been further elaborated to include the following main objectives:

- Prevention of sexual transmission of HIV and STDs

- Reduction of harm related to drug use

- Prevention of perinatal transmission

- Prevention of transmission through blood and blood products, tissue and organ transplants, and skin piercing procedures

- Provision of health care based on the latest international standards in counselling, clinical management, laboratory testing

- Reduction of the personal and social impact of HIV-infection

- Human rights' protection
- Reinforcement of programme performance and infrastructure

ARTICLE 13: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LIFE

Women and Poverty

175. Conditions of extreme poverty and poor living standards in the country are very limited, while hunger and starvation have long been overcome. Therefore, poverty can only be identified in terms of what is locally perceived to be an acceptable standard of living. Among the most vulnerable groups in this respect are single mothers and retired older women.

(a) The Government is very sensitive to the needs of single parents, the majority of whom are women. For example, the Public Assistance and Services Law,1991 (L. 8/1991) and its amendment Law 97(I)/1994 make special provisions for single parents even if they work full time. This legislation aims at safeguarding human dignity while promoting people's social inclusion and long-term independence from public funds.

(b) In order to achieve the above-mentioned goals, the legislation incorporates employment incentives together with social support services. Employment incentives are provided to single parents by discounting 50% of their net income or an amount up to CY£100, whichever of the two is higher, when calculating their monthly public assistance allowance.

176. The "Single-Parent Organization" (an NGO) has been established with the aim of identifying special problems facing these women, providing support (psychological and social) to its members and acting as a pressure group to improve their status. The Government supports this initiative by providing technical and annual financial assistance to the Organization through the grants-in-aid scheme.

177. Within the framework of the Leonardo EU Programme "Loxandra", single mothers with insufficient education and qualifications were helped to reenter the labour market utilizing their household skills.

178. **Social Pension:**

(a) The Social Pension (Amendment) Law, 2000 (L. 97(I)/2000) provides for the increase of the rate of social pension to 81% of the amount of the full basic pension provided under the Social Insurance Law (see under Article 11, "Social Pension", hereinabove).

(b) Moreover, by the Social Pension (Amendment) Law, 1999 (L. 53(I)/1999) and Social Pension (Amendment) Law, 2000 (L. 12(I)/2000) the age of the entitlement to social pension has changed from 68 to 66 as from 1.1.1999 and to 65 as from 1.1.2000.

179. **Family Benefits**

(a) Cyprus adopted a Tax Reform as from July 1st 2002. Within the provisions of the tax reform, the child benefit and the mothers' allowance have been promoted to support families with children and to lower the tax burden caused by the increase in indirect taxation.

(b) As from 1.1.2003 the Child Benefit to Families With Three Children Law, 2002 (L. 8(I)/2002) and the Child Benefit Law, 1987 (L. 314/1987) has been substituted by the Child Benefit Law, 2002 to 2003, (L. 167(I)/2002, as amended by Laws 22(I)/2003 and 57(I)/2003).

(c) Pursuant to the above legislation, every family residing in Cyprus with at least one child is entitled to a basic benefit provided that parent(s) and child live under the same roof. Benefit is payable to the parent or guardian, until the last child reaches the age limit. The following table shows the level of basic annual benefit as well as the supplementary annual benefit for families with income up to CY£6.000 and families with income between CY£6.000 and CY£12.000 according to the number of children in the family.

Table: Child Benefit

Number of children in the family	Basic annual benefit CY£	Supplementary Annual Benefit for families with income up to £6.000 per year CY£	Supplementary Annual Benefit for families with income between £6.000 and £12.000 CY£
Families with 1 child	200	50	25
Families with 2 children	400	200	150
Families with 3 children	1200	450	375
Families with 4 and more children	600 per child	200 per child	125 per child

(d) By virtue of the above legislation-

- Families with three and more children are paid monthly (12 equal payments) and families with one and two children are paid annually, at the end of the year.
- The level of family income that is taken into account in column 3, is the level of the un-taxable income three years prior to child benefit entitlement and the level of family income taken into account in column 4, is two times the level of un-taxable income three years prior to child benefit entitlement.

- Child benefit is adjusted every year on the 1st of January according to the increase of the cost of living.

(e) Moreover, as from 1.1.2003, the Mother's Allowance Law, 2000 (L. 129(I)/2000) has been substituted by the Mother's Allowance Law, 2003 (L. 21(I)/2003).

(f) Pursuant to Law 21(I)/2003:

- a mother's allowance is payable to mothers residing in Cyprus, who had at least four children and have ceased to be eligible to child benefit since all children have exceeded the age limit. The allowance is not payable to mothers who are entitled to social pension or to mothers receiving any other pension from another source, the rate of which is equal or higher than the maximum monthly rate of the basic old-age pension payable out of the social insurance scheme without increase for dependants.

- The rights of the mothers acquired by Law 129(I)/2000, as amended, are not affected.

- The rate of the allowance is fixed (CY£32, 23), and is payable for 13 months per year. It is adjusted every year on the 1st of January according to the increase of the cost of living.

ARTICLE 14: RURAL WOMEN

180. According to the latest Census of the Population carried out in 2001, 71% of Cypriots reside in the urban areas and 29% in the rural areas. In its endeavours for equality of opportunity for all citizens and to combat urbanization, the Government is concerned with supporting people, in particular women, belonging in the latter category. The Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment (MANRE) is primarily involved with supporting women residing in the rural areas, through the design and implementation of programmes and schemes within the context of the national rural development policy.

181. The MANRE offers education programmes targeting women in the rural areas and enabling them to increase their family income. A significant part of these programmes deal with non-agricultural activities (e.g. processed fruit etc.) and agrotourism. The latter constitutes a successful example of economic sustainability and female entrepreneurship. Of the 44 agro-tourism units in Cyprus, 36% are women-owned, while 14% are co-owned by women and men.

182. The MANRE continued offering the Scheme ''Encouraging Young People to Stay in the Rural Areas'', which provides for extending loans at low, subsidized interest rate to people up to 40 years old. During the period 1995-2003, 129 young persons took advantage of this scheme, of which 39 were women. In addition, a new national scheme encouraging alternative farming was launched in 2002, granting subsidies to farmers. Interest for participation was shown by 85 farmers to deal with organic farming, of which 6 were women.

183. Under **the Social Insurance (Amendment) Law, 2001 (L. 51(I)/2001),** which came into force on 6/10/2001, all women employed in agriculture are insured compulsorily as self-employed persons irrespective of their marital status. Therefore, full social security coverage for self-employed rural

women was granted during the period under review without discrimination between married and unmarried women that had existed before.

184. An important international conference was held in Nicosia from the 4-6 October 2000. The conference with the general topic ''The New Challenges of Women's Role in Rural Europe'' was organized by the Agricultural Research Institute and sponsored by the European Commission. Participants from 26 countries discussed relevant issues, such as the EU Policy and Rural Women, Job Creation and Employment, Women and Rural Economy, Gender Relations, etc.

185. In view of the forthcoming membership of Cyprus to the European Union, new opportunities for rural women are opened through the newly designed Rural Development Plan for the period 2004-2006, which has been submitted and is about to be approved by the European Commission. The Rural Development Plan offers a variety of schemes and measures that will be co-financed by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund and it is expected to enable rural families to undertake innovative roles and finally improve rural people's incomes and welfare.

ARTICLE 15: EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW

186. As stated in the Previous Report, the equality principle (that is equality before the Legislative, the Executive and the Judicial Authorities) is safeguarded by the Constitution of the Republic. **(Article 28 of the Constitution).** Furthermore, the Legislative, the Executive and the Judicial Authorities are bound to secure within the limits of their respective competence, the effective application of this provision. **(Article 35 of the Constitution).**

187. Cyprus is a party to all International Treaties (U.N. and Council of Europe) safeguarding human rights and, in particular, the principle of equality.

(a) In addition to international instruments mentioned in the Previous Report, during the period under review Cyprus has:

- ratified the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW in 2002, by Law 1(III)/2002;
- ratified the Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in 2002, by Law 13(III)/2002;
- ratified the UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage, and Registration of Marriages in 2002, by Law 16(III)/2002;
- submitted to the UN an acceptance document on the amendment of Article 20, paragraph 1 of the CEDAW on 31 July 2002;
- signed the Treaty of Accession of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic to the European Union, on 16 April 2003, which was ratified by Law 35(III)/2003 and, thus, the Treaty of the European Union and the totality of the acquis communautaire, containing

extensive specific provisions on gender equality and the advancement of women will be binding upon the Republic as from 1st May, 2004.

(b) In the meantime, of the accession process to the European Union, Cyprus has proceeded with a number of legislative and administrative measures to eliminate discrimination where it existed and to make provision for equal treatment in various fields.

188. Pursuant to the above, the following legislative measures were taken for the purpose of harmonization in this field:

- Cyprus registered with the Director General of the ILO the denunciation of Convention No. 89 (L. 205(I)/2002) and its Protocol on 2 July 2001 and has proceeded with the abolition of the Night Work (Women) Law Cap 180 for compliance with the European Union Directive 76/207/EU, which required Member States to abolish or revise any legislation which is contrary to this principle. The denunciation of Convention No. 89 and its Protocol took effect for Cyprus as from 9 July 2002.

- A plethora of legislative measures relating to women's status have been enacted, which have already been analysed under the specific Articles. These include, inter alia:

  - The Protection of Maternity Law, 1997 (L. 100(I)/1997 as amended by Laws 45(I)/2000 and 64(I)/2002) and The Protection of Maternity (Safety and Health) at Work Regulations, 2002, (P.I 255/2002) - harmonizing with Directive 92/87EEC.

  - The Social Insurance (Amendment) Law, 2001 (L. 51(I)/2001) – harmonizing with Directives 79/7/EEC and 86/603/EC.

  - The Parental Leave and Leave on Grounds of Force Majeure Law, 2002 (L.69(I)/2002)- harmonizing with Directive 96/34/EEC.

  - The Equal Treatment between Men and Women in Occupational Social Insurance Schemes Law, 2002 (L. 133(I)/2002) – harmonizing with Directive 86/378/EEC.

  - The Equal Pay between Men and Women for the Same Work or for Work of Equal Value Law, 2002 (L. 177(I)/2002) - harmonizing with Directives 75/117/EEC and 97/80/EC.

  - The Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002)- harmonizing with Directives 76/207/EEC and 97/80/EC.

189. In the field of violence against women, the following legal measures have been, inter alia, introduced covering domestic violence, trafficking and exploitation of women, sexual harassment and genital mutilation:

- The Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, 1994 (L. 47(I)/1994).

- The Combating of Trafficking of Persons and Sexual Exploitation of Minors Law, 2002 (L. 3(I)/2000), in line with "Joint Action" of 24.1.1997 of the Council of the EU on the basis of the Article K3 of the Treaty of the European Union.

- The Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, 2000 (L. 119(I)/2000).

- The Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002), includes provisions on sexual harassment (see above).

- The Criminal Code (Amendment) Law, 2003 (L. 48(I)/2003), criminalizing genital mutilation.

190. Efforts to eliminate legal discrimination in various other fields of legislation have been continued with very positive results as has already been mentioned under several Articles, i.e. discrimination in the field of social insurance, citizenship etc.

(a) Efforts to abolish sex discrimination in the Criminal Code have resulted in the enactment of the Criminal Code (Amendment No. 4) Law, 2002 (L. 145(I)/2002).

(b) In line with the harmonization with the acquis communautaire, Cyprus has introduced Legal Aid to family cases, as well as to violations of human rights, by the Legal Aid Law, 2002 (L. 165(I)/2002).

191. For a comprehensive list of the legal measures taken since the Previous Report, see Part IV.

192. It is important to stress that the acquis communautaire requires, not only legal harmonization but also effective implementation and sufficient administrative infrastructure. Therefore, Cyprus is duty-bound as a member state of the European Union to implement effectively the harmonizing legislation including, of course, the extensive provisions in relation to gender equality.

193. The Judicial System in Cyprus has become more women-friendly. The ratio of women judges presented an increase from 5.3% in 1990 to 15.2% in 1995 to 21.7% in 2000 and 26.4% in 2003. Moreover, at the end of 2003 out of 1513 Lawyers, 600 were women, (39.65%). In addition, the Courts are at the final stages of acquiring specialized statement videotaping equipment as well as of making the necessary changes in the courtrooms, in line with the provisions of the Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, 2000 (L. 119(I)/2000) aimed at the protection of vulnerable victims and witnesses, which are mainly children and women.

194. The NMWR, in collaboration with the Supreme Court, organized a seminar for the sensitization and training of Judges and lawyers on Domestic Violence in October 2002. The keynote speaker was an American Supreme Court Judge expert in this field.

ARTICLE 16: FAMILY LAW

195. The effort for the reform and modernization of family law continued. Having succeeded in enacting a set of completely new laws relating to family law, covering, inter alia, Family Courts, Parent and Children Relations, Property Rights between Spouses, Civil Marriage, Legal Status of

Children born out of Wedlock, that were analysed in the Previous Report, the emphasis during the period under review was placed on improving those laws and on implementation.

196. Among the new laws that have been enacted in this field are:

- The Adoption Law, 1995 (L. 19(I)/1995) bringing the domestic law in line with the European Convention on the Adoption of Children;

- The Marriage Law, 2003 (L. 104(I)/2003) which consolidates and modernizes two existing laws, covering on the one hand civil marriages among Greek Cypriots (Law No. 21/1990) and on the other hand mixed marriages and marriages where at least one of the parties is not Cypriot; (Cap 279)

- A very important element of Law 104(I)/2003 is that it allows, for the first time, civil marriages between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. Law 104(I)/2003 is fully in line with the provisions of the UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, which was ratified by Law No. 16(III)/2002.

197. A number of amending laws have been enacted with a view to improving existing legislation. These include-

- **Parent and Children (Amendment) laws**

- **Property Rights between Spouses (Amendment) laws**

- **Family Courts (Amendment) laws**

- **Children (Legal Status) (Amendment) laws**

198. A drafting committee under the Law Commissioner, established by a Council of Ministers Decision, has prepared a bill on family mediation. This bill introduces the institution of family mediation to all family cases including parental care, maintenance of children, alimony, property relations between spouses. The bill is fully in line with the Council of Europe's Recommendation (R.98) of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on family mediation. The bill is ready for submission to the House of Representatives.

PART III - STATISTICAL DATA

A. DEMOGRAPHY AND HEALTH

Table A1. Selected Demographic and health characteristics of the population of Cyprus for the years 1994, 1999, 2001

	1994	1999	2001
Population of Cyprus ('000s, end of year) [2]	645,4	690,5	705,5
Proportion of children <15 years of age (%)[2]	25,0	22,8	21,5
Proportion of persons aged 65+ (%) [2]	11,0	11,2	11,7
Crude birth rate (/1000) [2]	16,2	12,4	11,6
Extra-marital births (%) [1,2]	9,6	21,9	24,9
Crude death rate (/1000) [2]	7,7	7,4	6,9
Expectation of life at birth (men – women) [1,2]	75,3-79,8 (94/95)	75,3–80,4 (98/99)	76,1–81,0 00/01)
Infant mortality rate (/1000 live births) [1]	8,6	6,0	4,9
Crude marriage rate (/1000) [2]	9,7	13,2	15,1
Crude divorce rate (/1000) [2]	0,87	1,74	1,71
Maternal mortality rate [1]	0,0	0,0	0,0
Access to clean water (%)[2]	100	100	100
Sanitary facilities	98,7 [6]	—	99,8 [7]
Level of immunization (DPT3, OPV3, MMR) [7]	82,2	84,3 (2000)	85,6
Rubella vaccination [3]	83,2	84,7 (2000)	86,6
Expenditure on health services (%G.N.P.) [3]	4,9	5,8	6,1
Persons per doctor [4,5]	415	390	381
Persons per dentist [4,5]	1.203	1.136	1.106
Persons per nurse [4,5]	233	233	237
Persons per hospital bed [4,5]	195	223	229
Hospital beds per nurse [4,5]	1,6	1,4	1,4
Number of beds per 10.000 population [4,5]	51,2	44,8	43,7

[1] The mean age of women at first marriage appears to be higher than the mean age of women at the birth of the first child for the following reasons:

- The mean age of the mother has been based on total number of births, including extramarital births.
- The number of marriages includes those among foreigners getting married in Cyprus.
- For the birth of the child the exact date is recorded, while for marriage only the year is recorded.

[2] Occasional deaths recorded, 0 – 1 per year.

[3] Universal access to clean water.

Sources (1,2,4,5 Statistical Service, 3 Ministry of Health):

1. Demographic Report 1997.
2. Demographic Report 2001.
3. Official results from cluster surveys for immunization coverage of the MoH.
4. Health and Hospital Statistics 1996.
5. Health and Hospital Statistics 2001.
6. 1992 Census.
7. 2001 Census.

Table A2. Total Fertility Rate for the years 1980, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2001 and 2002

1980	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002
2,5	2,4	2,0	1,6	1,6	1,5

Table A3. Number of Live Births for the years 1980, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2001 and 2002

	1980	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002
All mothers	10.383	10.622	9.869	8.447	8.167	7.883
Mothers aged under 20	816	708	413	274	189	173

Table A4. Mean Age of Women at the Birth of the First Child for the years 1980, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2001 and 2002

1980	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002
23,8	24,7	25,5	26,1	26,3	26,7

Table A5. Mean Age at First Marriage for the years 1980, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2001 and 2002

	1980	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002
Women	23,7	24,1	25,5	26,5	26,6	26,6
Men	26,7	27,1	27,9	29,1	29,5	29,3

Table B1. Percentage of Tertiary Education Students in Cyprus by Age for the Year 2001

Age Group	2001	
	Women	Men
40+	27%	73%
25-39	48%	52%
Under 25	59%	41%

Table B2. Number of Tertiary Education Students (in Cyprus and Abroad) by Field of Study and Sex for the years 1994/95 - 1997/98, 2000/01 and 2001/02

Field of Study	1994/95			1995/96			1996/97			1997/98			2000/01			2001/02		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Education	126	1199	1325	110	1298	1408	137	1364	1501	156	1517	1673	524	2117	2641	583	2292	2875
Humanities and Arts	449	1212	1661	494	1352	1846	564	1612	2176	719	1922	2641	793	2755	3548	826	3052	3878
Social Sciences, Business, Law	3163	3020	6183	3153	3190	6343	3042	3273	6315	3142	3701	6843	3921	5177	9098	4493	5642	10135
Science	937	640	1577	930	711	1641	1043	805	1848	1189	1018	2207	1968	1584	3552	2125	1766	3891
Engin., Manuf., Construction	1887	417	2304	1920	434	2354	1886	427	2313	1887	442	2299	1849	470	2319	2042	551	2593
Agriculture	123	23	146	141	33	174	136	36	172	143	41	184	181	98	279	232	100	332
Health and Welfare	710	852	1562	823	1209	2032	800	1151	1951	791	1101	1892	793	1263	2056	918	1455	2373
Services	669	696	1365	641	716	1357	1520	1023	2543	1538	989	2527	1165	909	2074	1752	974	2726
Preparatory & Not Stated	491	357	848	531	401	932	536	444	980	556	520	1076	9	8	17	3	3	6
Total	8555	8416	16971	8743	9344	18087	9664	10135	19799	10091	11251	21342	11203	14381	25584	12974	15835	28809

Table B3. Percentage Distribution of Teaching Staff in Tertiary Education Institutions by Sex for the years 1994/95, 1999/2000 and 2000/01

Institution	1994/95			1999/2000			2000/01		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
University of Cyprus	73	27	100	73	27	100	75	25	100
Police Academy	-	-	-	83	17	100	90	10	100
School of Nursing	20	80	100	28	72	100	27	73	100
Higher Technological Institute	81	19	100	83	17	100	82	18	100
Higher Hotel Institute	59	41	100	64	36	100	61	39	100
Forestry College	100	0	100	100	0	100	100	0	100
Mediterranean Inst. Of Manag.	80	20	100	67	33	100	60	40	100

Table B4. Percentage of Women in Decision Making Positions in Education for the years 1994/95, 1998/99, 1999/2000 and 2000/01

Level of Education	all staff				principals				assistant principals			
	94/95	98/99	99/2000	2000/01	94/95	98/99	99/2000	2000/01	94/95	98/99	99/2000	2000/01
Pre-Primary**	98	99	99	98	96	98	98	95	*	100	100	*
Primary	65	73	74	74	39	36	36	53	*	53	63	*
Secondary	50	54	55	55	16	27	29	30	35	42	42	42

* Assistant Principals reported together with Principals

** Covers ISCEDO (Pre-primary) and Day Nursery schools

Table B5. Percentage Distribution of Promotion Positions in Education (Inspectors/Senior Officers) by Sex for the year 1999/2000

Position	Primary Education		Secondary Education	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Inspector	89%	11%	70%	30%
Senior Officer	67%	33%	100%	0%

Table B6. Average Normal Monthly Rates of Pay (CY £) Per Person in Primary and Secondary Education by Sex for the years 1998, 1999 and 2002

Occupation	Men			Women		
	1998	1999	2002	1998	1999	2002
Primary Education Teaching Professionals	1.220	1.163	1.278	1.063	1.023	1.194
Secondary Teaching Professionals	1.391	1.404	1.576	1.285	1.284	1.478

C. LABOUR

Table C1. Percentage Distribution of the Labour Force by Sex for the years 1990, 1999 - 2003

Year	Women	Men
1990	38	62
1999	41	59
2000	43	57
2001	44	56
2002	44	56
2003	45	55

Table C2. Percentage Distribution of Employment by Sector of Activity and Sex for the years 1990, 2000 – 2003

Sector of Activity	1990		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Agriculture	6	6	5	6	4	6	4	6	4	6
Industry	24	36	13	31	13	32	12	32	11	32
Services	70	58	82	63	83	62	84	62	85	62
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table C3. Percentage Distribution of Employment by Status of Employment and Sex for the years 1990, 2000 – 2003

Status of Employment	1990		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Employees	84	73	84	70	84	71	84	71	84	70
Employers	2	8	2	9	2	10	1	9	1	9
Self-Employed	9	18	8	20	8	18	9	19	8	20
Family Workers	6	-	6	1	6	1	6	1	7	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table C4. Part – time Employment as a Percentage of the Total Employment for the years 1999 – 2003

Year	% of Total Employment
1999	7
2000	8
2001	8
2002	7
2003	9

Table C5. Percentage Distribution of Part – time Employment by Sex for the years 1990, 2000 – 2003

Year	Women	Men
1990	66	34
2000	69	31
2001	66	34
2002	69	31
2003	66	34

Table C6. Percentage Distribution of the Unemployment by Sex for the years 1990, 1995, 1999 – 2003

Year	Women	Men
1990	51	49
1995	55	45
1999	55	45
2000	63	37
2001	63	37
2002	56	44
2003	49	51

Table C7. Percentage Distribution of the Long-term Unemployed by Sex for the years 1990, 1995, 1999 – 2003

Year	Women	Men
1990	55	45
1995	59	41
1999	64	36
2000	78	22
2001	58	42
2002	63	37
2003	57	43

Table D1. Number of Voters by Sex in Last National Election (2003)

	2003
Women	242.217 (50,8%)
Men	234.128
Total	476.345

Table D2. Number of Members of the National Parliament by Sex for the years 1981, 1991, 1996 and 2001

	1980	1990	1995	2000	2001
Women	0 (0%)	1 (1,8%)	1 (1,8%)	4 (7,1%)	6 (10,7%)
Men	35	55	55	52	50
Total	35	56	56	56	56

Table D3. Number of Government Ministers by Sex for the years 1980, 1990, 1995, 2001 and 2003

	1980	1990	1995	2000	2003
Women	0	0	1	0	1
Men	11	11	10	11	10
Total	11	11	11	11	11

Table D4. Number of Judges by Sex for the years 1980, 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2003

	1980	1990	1995	2000	2003
Women	0 (0%)	3 (5,3%)	9 (15,2%)	18 (21,7%)	23 (26,4%)
Men	24	54	50	65	64
Total	24	57	59	83	87

Table D5. Number of Senior Level Civil Servants by Sex for the years 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2001

	1990	1995	2000	2001
Women	4 (2%)	11 (4,9%)	24 (13,5%)	51 (20,9%)
Men	196	214	154	193
Total	200	225	178	244

Table D6. Members of Municipal Councils or Other Local Area Governing bodies by Sex for the years 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2001

	1990	1995	2000	2001
Women	35 (12,2%)	48 (14,1%)	66 (17,2%)	74 (18,6%)
Men	252	292	318	324
Total	287	340	384	398

Table D7. Members of Central Bank Board by Sex for the years 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2001

	1990	1995	2000	2001
Women	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Men	6	6	6	6
Total	6	6	6	6

Table D8. Number of Chief Editors of National Newspapers by Sex for the years 2000 and 2003

	2000	2003
Women	1 (4%)	2 (8,7%)
Men	24	21
Total	25	23

Table D9. Number of Journalists by Sex for the years 1990, 1995 and 2000

	1990	1995	2000
Women	83 (20,5%)	182 (31,3%)	346 (43,6%)
Men	321	399	448
Total	404	581	794

E. CRIME

Table E1. Persons Convicted by Sex in the years 1980, 1990, 1995, 1999 and 2000

	1980	1990	1995	1999	2000
Women	42 (9,3%)	55 (8,7%)	53 (8,4%)	70 (7,6%)	61 (7,2%)
Men	411	577	575	849	791
Total	453	632	628	919	852

Table E2. Number of Victims of Serious Assault by Sex in the years 1990, 1995, 1999 and 2000

	1990	1995	1999	2000
Women	7 (9,3%)	16 (10,1%)	29 (20,1%)	23 (20,9%)
Men	68	142	115	87
Total	75	158	144	110

Table E3. Number of Victims of Sexual Assault by Sex in the years 1990, 1995, 1999 and 2000

	1990	1995	1999	2000
Women	8 (100%)	17 (100%)	16 (88,9%)	36 (83,7%)
Men	0	0	2	7
Total	8	17	18	43

Table E4. Clear up rates for Rape and Attempted Rape[8] in the years 1980, 1990, 1995, 1999 and 2000

	1980	1990	1995	1999	2000
%	100,0	200,0	133,0	143,0	146,2

[8] Clear up rates are the number of cases solved by the police as a % of the total number of cases known to the police for the year in question, regardless of whether the case came to the attention of the police in that year or in previous years. Clear up rates thus exceed 100% in some cases.

PART IV - LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Hereinbelow, there is a list of the most important legislative measures, on gender equality, taken during the period under consideration, which are relevant to the CEDAW.

A. International Instruments:

1. **The ILO Convention on Part-time Employment, No. 175 (Ratification) Law, 1997 (L. 6(III)/1997).**

2. **Article 20 of the Revised European Social Charter of the Council of Europe, on equal opportunities and equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation without discrimination on the grounds of sex.** This was ratified by **Law No. 27(III) of 2000.**

3. **The Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ILO Convention No. 182) (Ratification) Law, 2000 (L. 31 (III)/2000).**

4. **The Optional Protocol of the CEDAW (Ratification) Law, 2002, (L. 1(III)/2002).**

5. **The Protocol 12 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Ratification) Law, 2002 (L. 13(III)/2002).**

6. **The UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (Ratification) Law, 2002 (L. 16(III)/ 2002).**

7. **The Republic of Cyprus submitted to the United Nations an acceptance document on the amendment of Article 20, paragraph 1 of the CEDAW on 31 July 2002.**

8. **The Treaty of Accession of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the**

Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic to the European Union, (Ratification) Law, 2003 (L. 35(III)/2003).

B. National Legislation:

(1) FAMILY LAW

Marriage

9. **The Civil Marriage Law, 1990 (L. 21/1990,** as amended by **Laws No. 28(I)/1994, 93(I)/1994, 57(I)/1995, 58(I)/1995 and 72(I)/2001)** - Repealed by **the Marriage Law, 2003 (L.104 (I)/2003).**

10. **The Marriage Law, 2003 (L. 104(I)/2003).**

Children

11. **The Children (Legal Status) Law, 1991 (L.187/1991,** as amended by **Laws No. 13/1991 and 161(I)/2000).**

Adoption

12. **The Adoption Law, 1995 (L. 19(I)/1995).**

13. **The Social Insurance (Amendment) Law, 1996 (L. 55(I)/1996).**

14. **The Social Insurance (Amendment) (No. 2) Law, 1998 (L. 84(I)/1998).**

15. **The Social Insurance (Amendment) Law, 2001 (L. 2(I)/2001).**

Relations between Parents and Children

16. **The Relations between Parents and Children Law, 1990 (L. 216/1990,** as amended by **Laws No. 60(I)/1995, 95(I)/1995, 30(I)/1997, 60(I)/1997, 21(I)/1998 and 190(I)/2002).**

Property Relations Between Spouses

17. **The Spouses Property Relations (Regulation) Law, 1991 (L. 232/1991**, as amended by **Laws No. 49(I)/1995, 34(I)/1996, 25(I)/1998 and 58(I)/1999).**

Family Courts

18. **The Family Courts Law, 1990 (L. 23/1990,** as amended by **Laws No. 247/1990, 231/1991, 88(I)/1994, 33(I)/1996, 61(I)/1997, 26(I)/1998, 92(I)/1998, 46(I)/1999, 96(I)/1999 and 58(I)/2000).**

19. **The Family Courts (Religious Groups) Law, 1994 (L. 87(I)/1994,** as amended by **Laws No. 46(I)/1995, 52(I)/1995, 38(I)/1996, 29(I)/1997 and 22(I)/1998).**

(2) LABOUR LAW

Equal Pay

20. **The Equal Pay Between Men and Women for Work of Equal Value Law, 1989 (L. 158/1989,** as amended by **Law 144(I)/2000)** - Repealed by L.177(I)/2002.

21. **Regulations: (P.I. 283/2000, P.I.141/2001**– Repealed by **L. 177(I)/2002).**

22. **The Equal Pay Between Men and Women for the Same Work or for Work of Equal Value Law, 2002 (L. 177(I)/2002).**

Equal Treatment

23. **The Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law, 2002 (L. 205(I)/2002).**

24. **The Part-Time Employees (Prohibition of Discriminatory Treatment) Law, 2002 (L. 76(I)/2002).**

Night Work

25. **The 1990 Protocol to the Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised) 1948 (Ratification) Law, 1993, (Repeal) Law, 2002 (L. 21(III)/2002).**

26. **The Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised) 1948 (Ratification) Law, (Repeal) Law, 2002 (L. 22(III)/2002).**

27. **The Employment of Women During the Night Law, (Repeal) Law 2002 (L. 107(I)/2002).**

Maternity Protection

28. **The Maternity Protection Law, 1987 (L. 54/1987,** as amended by **Laws No. 66/1988** and **48(I)/1994)** - Repealed by **L. 100(I)/1997.**

29. **The Maternity Protection Law, 1997 (L. 100(I)/1997,** as amended by **Laws No. 45(I)/2000 and 64(I)/2002).**

30. **The Maternity Protection (Safety and Health at Work) Regulations, 2002 (P.I. 255/2002).**

Parental Leave

31. **The Parental Leave and Leave on Grounds of Force Majeure Law, 2002, (L. 69(I)/2002).**

32. **The Termination of Employment (Amendment) Law, 2002 (L. 70(I)/2002).**

33. **The Social Insurance (Amendment) Law, 2002 (L. 71(I)/2002).**

34. **The Annual Holidays with Pay (Amendment) (No. 2) Law, 2002 (L.72(I)/2002).**

35. **The Places of Entertainment Employees (Conditions of Service) (Amendment) (No. 2) Law, 2002 (L. 73(I)/2002).**

Reconciliation of Professional and Family Life (Encouragement of Women to Participate in the Labour Market)

36. The Old People's and Disabled Persons' Homes Law, 1991-1994, (L.222/1991 -L. 64(I)/1994).

37. The Day Care Centers for School-Age Children Law, 1996 (L. 2(I)/1996).

38. The Day Care Centers for School-Age Children Regulations, 1997 (P.I.157/1997).

39. The Old People's and Disabled Persons' Homes Regulations, 2000 (P.I. 213/2000).

40. The Day Care Centers for Adults Law, 1997 (L. 38(I)/1997).

41. The Day Care Centers for Adults Regulations, 2000 (P.I. 394/2000).

Public Service

42. **Regulations by virtue of section 87 of the Public Service Laws, (1/1990, as amended), P.I. 101/1995, P.I. 397/1998 and P.I. 276/1999,** which regulate, inter alia, maternity leave.

(3) SOCIAL INSURANCE – SOCIAL BENEFITS

Social Insurance – Women Farmers

43. The Social Insurance (Amendment) (No. 2) Law, 2001 (L. 51(I)/2001).

Social Insurance

44. The Social Insurance (Amendment) (No. 4) Law, 2001 (L. 143(I)/2001).

45. The Social Insurance (Amendment) (No. 2) Law, 2002 (L. 132(I)/2002).

Provident Fund and Professional Social Insurance Schemes

46. The Provident Fund (Amendment) Law, 2002 (L. 130(I)/2002).

47. The Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Professional Social Insurance Schemes Law, 2002 (L. 133(I)/2002).

Child Benefits

48. The Child's Benefits Law, 1987 (L. 314/1987, as amended by **Laws No. 75/1991, 35(I)/1996 and 36(I)/2001** –Repealed by **L. 167(I)/2002).**

49. The Child's Benefits to Families With Three Children Law, 2002 (L.8(I)/2002) – Repealed by **L. 167(I)/2002.**

50. The Child's Benefits Law, 2002 (L.167(I)/2002, as amended by **Laws No. 22(I)/2003 and L. 57(I)/2003).**

Mother's Allowance

51. The Mother's Allowance Law, 2000 (L. 129(I)/2000, as amended by **Law No.10 (I)/ 2002** – Repealed by **Law 21(I)/2003).**

52. The Mother's Allowance Law, 2003 (L. 21(I)/2003).

Social Pension

53. The Social Pension Law, 1995 (L. 25(I)/1995, as amended by **Laws No.56 (I)/1996, 53(I)/1999, 12(I)/2000 and 97(I)/2000).**

(4) VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Violence in the Family

54. The Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, 1994 (L. 47(I)/1994) - Repealed by **L. 119(I)/2000].**

55. The Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law, 2000 (L. 119(I)/2000).

Trafficking of Persons and Sexual Exploitation of Minors

56. The Combating of the Trafficking of Persons and Sexual Exploitation of Minors Law, 2000 (L. 3(I)/2000).

Witness Protection

57. The Witnesses Protection Law, 2001 (L. 95(I)/2001).

Criminal Code

58. The Criminal Code (Amendment No. 4) Law, 2002 (L. 145(I)/2002).

59. The Criminal Code (Amendment) Law, 2003, (L. 48(I)/2003) – genital mutilation.

(5) MISCELLANEOUS

Cyprus Citizenship

60. The Citizenship of the Republic (Amendments) Laws No. 105(I)/1998, 65(I)/1999, 168(I)/2001 and 67(I)/2002 - Repealed by **L.141 (I)/2002.**

61. The Public Records Law, 2002 (L.141(I)/2002).

Legal Aid

62. The Legal Aid Law, 2002 (L. 165(I)/2002).